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Hitler's birthday gift: a high school massacre



Eric Harris



Dylan Klebold

MOMENTS before mayhem descended on Columbine High School, Brooks Brown bumped into a friend on a suicide mission. "I said, 'Hey, man,'" Mr Brown remembered, "and he said, 'Brooks, I like you. Get out of here. Go home.'"

Mr Brown was one of the lucky ones. Eric Harris, the 16-year-old he knew as "just an odd, nice guy", had announced his own death on the Internet and transformed himself into a walking arsenal.

He was about to unleash four hours of terror on a proud and flourishing school, the latest victim of an epidemic of teenage gun violence that has left America in shock.

It was soon after 11am on Tuesday. Bristling with guns and with explosives strapped to their bodies, Harris and his accomplice, Dylan Klebold, also 16, launched their attack on the school that called them "outcasts", with a bomb.

It detonated on a broad boulevard that forms the west side of Columbine's large, landscaped grounds. From there the two teenagers in their trademark black trenchcoats strode across a car park used by senior pupils, and started shooting.

Frank Wade, 18, saw one of their early victims - a girl shot in the leg near the top of a short flight of steps. As she lay wounded, a young man came to her rescue and paid dearly for it. "The trench coat



An anguished America grappled yesterday with the worst schoolyard massacre in its history, which left 15 dead and 16 injured. Two high school outcasts, members of the Trenchcoat Mafia gang, obsessed with

walked up and shot the boy point blank in the back," Mr Wade said later, when Columbine had become a war zone of stretchers, SWAT teams and panic-stricken parents.

At 11.30 about 400 pupils were eating an early lunch in the school's ground-floor cafeteria. Most would soon flee for their lives, but initially they thought the popping sounds and smoke from outside were a prank.

Seconds later, Harris and Klebold entered, firing sometimes at random and sometimes with grim selection criteria. Repeatedly, they warned that "jocks" - the school's popular athletes - were their intended victims.

From the start there was evidence of detailed planning. At least three more home-made bombs exploded within minutes of each other in the car

park, the cafeteria and an adjoining snack room. As fellow pupils and at least one teacher staggered from gunshot wounds and bullets ricocheted off steel lockers, survivors ran for cover wherever it could be found. Some spent the next three hours barricaded inside classrooms; others in a tiny janitor's storeroom. Television cameras zoomed in on a desperate note scrawled onto paper and pressed to an upstairs window: "Help. I'm bleeding to death."

From the cafeteria the gunmen walked calmly upstairs to the library that police would later call the "kill zone" - 45 pupils had scrambled under desks, but they found no shelter.

"There was a girl crouched under a desk, and one of the gunmen came over and said, 'Peekaboo' and shot her in the neck," said Byron Kirkland, 15, who escaped uninjured. Bree Pasquale was in the li-

brary too. Her horrifying account was later broadcast repeatedly - the most powerful commentary in the media storm that has since engulfed Littleton. "Everyone around me got shot, and I begged him for ten minutes not to shoot me," Ms Bree, 16, sobbed to a television reporter, who was also crying.

Two pupils next to her were shot at point blank range. "He shot one student because she had a hat on and a black student because he was black, saying it was all because people were mean to him last year."

Several pupils, after running to safety with their arms aloft, on police orders lest the gunmen try to escape with them, said the killers acted with quiet glee, giggling even as they carried out their executions. One student who listened from behind a

locked door said: "We heard someone scream. 'Please don't kill me, please don't kill me.' Then we heard a voice say 'That's too bad,' and then we heard a shot."

After hours of confusion, Jefferson County Sheriff John Stone said 12 bodies had been counted in the library, one immediately outside it and two elsewhere on the school grounds.

At least 19 pupils were taken to area hospitals by ambulance or helicopter. Several remained in critical condition yesterday, including an unnamed 17-year-old boy with five gunshot wounds to the chest. A girl with nine shrapnel wounds from a bomb was said to be improving.

Police were at the school within five minutes of the first shots, but were hampered from the start by fear of bombs and booby traps; up to 15 explosions were reported during the afternoon and 30 more devices had been found by bomb squads by yesterday morning, three of them planned in nearby cars and one at Mr Harris's home.

SWAT teams arriving two hours into the ordeal

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West shifts towards Kosovo land force

By MICHAEL EVANS AND PHILIP WEBSTER

INCREASING expectations that Nato ground troops could be sent into Kosovo before President Milosevic signs a peace deal were heightened by Tony Blair and the US Government last night.

The Prime Minister flew into Washington for talks with President Clinton, having indicated to the Commons before he left that a land force may be used against a "degraded" Serbian war machine.

The United States said last night that it would back any decision by Nato to revise the existing feasibility study for deploying ground troops in Kosovo if top alliance officials called for such a reassessment. "If the military command and the Nato Secretary-General be-

a wholesale, opposed invasion remains as it was at the beginning, but I use my words this morning with some care," he told a press briefing. "We are determined that an international force will deploy in Kosovo once the airstrikes have done their job, so the people can return to their homes."

Mr Blair and Mr Clinton met to prepare for the Nato summit which begins tomorrow. But before he left Mr Blair also appealed to the Russian people for support for Nato's action against Mr Milosevic. He told Russian television that Nato had no quarrel with the Serbian people, still less with the Russian people. Both Russia and Serbia stood out against fascism during the Second World War.

He said the bombing had nothing to do with a Nato struggle against Russia. It was a basic humanitarian cause. "What is happening in Kosovo today - people being herded onto trains, driven from their homes at gunpoint, women raped, children without fathers - the last time this happened, it happened in Nazi Germany."

In Paris, President Chirac, speaking last night on the eve of leaving for the Washington summit, called for the Nato airstrikes against Yugoslavia to intensify in order to break Belgrade's defiance. "Massacres, rape, pillaging, torching of villages and an exodus of families who have been separated, that is the action of the Serb authorities and it must stop," he said in a radio and television address to the nation.

Downing Street said that the Washington summit would discuss ground troops, but there was no question of setting a timetable. The spokesman said that the summit would examine whether it was necessary to increase the proposed peace implementation force for Kosovo of 28,000 troops. The present strength of the force waiting in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is about 12,000; it would rise to 42,000 when the extra British armoured battle group arrives.



The Queen kicking off her shoes before entering the women's quarters of a house in Korea

The Queen puts her best (bare) foot forward

EVEN a monarch is expected to respect local customs. The Queen, celebrating her 73rd birthday yesterday at a rural village in Korea, had to remove her white court shoes before entering a traditional house in her socked feet (Alan Hamilton writes).

She had been watching the preparation of pickled cabbage outside a home in the preserved heritage village of Hayhoe, 150 miles south of Seoul, when she was invited to inspect the women's quarters of the still-inhabited 18th century dwelling. In a brief moment of confusion, she had to be reminded that shoes are not

worn indoors. Casually, without even bending down, she kicked off her shoes, and her mainly female entourage immediately followed suit. After a brief encounter with the interior of the wooden house, she re-emerged to wriggle her feet back into her shoes and continue her birthday programme.

The Queen's momentary scowl at being wrong-footed was an uncharacteristic moment during a birthday that she appeared to be thoroughly enjoying. The day was crowned with a standing ovation at a concert in Seoul that brought a tear to her eye and warm smile of gratitude.



"I think we should get her a pair of shoes"

INSIDE

Thatcherite protest

Tory Shadow Cabinet members balked at their leadership's orders to abandon a central tenet of Thatcherism - the search for private sector solutions to the health and education systems. Politics, pages 14, 15

Hospital fight over boy's life

Relatives of a disabled boy and doctors were involved in a violent hospital fracas as the family tried to revive him against medical advice, a court was told. Page 11

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DENVER SHOOTING: THE GANG



A Swat prepares for a final search. The risk of booby traps had forced them to leave the dead where they fell

Smart mavericks capable of a terrible violence

Schoolmates tell Giles Whittell of trenchcoated youth's rage against life

LIKE the dead and injured, they came from middle-class families. They were not victims of broken homes. They were both "smart" and "gifted", and they enjoyed tenpin bowling. Yet something about life had soured them in the most brutal way.

Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold went to war on Tuesday having given plenty of warning. They and their friends wore armbands saying "I hate people" and scrawled messages like "Kill all athletes" in their school lavatories - but to prosperous Littleton, nothing about them seemed worth taking seriously.

The first two martyrs of the Trenchcoat Mafia turned up for a pre-school bowling class

before their massacre seeming calm, others were there recalled. Three days earlier they had gone to a New York-themed party after the school prom "in pretty good spirits", according to a friend.

Most fellow pupils at Columbine High School knew of the Trenchcoat Mafia's sinister garb. Some knew they wrote dark poetry, immersed themselves in World War Two history and the heavy metal of Marilyn Manson, and were liable to offer "Hell Hitler" as a greeting. The idea that they would carry out their threats was, however, unthinkable.

"I knew they were capable of violence. I just didn't know they would actually do it," said Pauline Colby, a former mem-

ber of the teenage gang. "They were very angry, but they didn't know how to release their anger. They were angry about people not accepting them and no one knowing how smart they were."

They were "jerks", "outcasts" or "satanists", depending on who you talked to at their school. But some actually liked them, and their insights only deepened the mystery of why the two boiled over.

"He was into guns and stuff like that, but he was pretty nice to me," said Nikke Vendetta, a fellow pupil who played fantasy baseball with Klebold. "He was just a normal kid." Joe Mallon agreed. "He never really got angry at anyone." The same was not true of Har-

ris, whose sworn enemies were the school's sports stars: its "jocks".

"He was going after jocks," Harris's friend, Brooks Brown, said emphatically after the shooting. "He hated them with a passion because they always made fun of him and threatened him. They did it especially in his sophomore [second] year."

The pair may have used guns belonging to Harris's father, a retired military officer, sources told yesterday's *Denver Post*.

They were also often heard at school discussing how to obtain assault weapons and Uz-style machine pistols. Besides building websites for a hobby, they built bombs.

"We found pipe bombs, incendiary bombs and propane bombs with nails and timing devices," Sheriff John Stone said yesterday, when the risk of more explosions forced police to leave the dead where they had fallen.

Neighbours reported hearing sawing and grinding noises from the closed garage at the Harris home in a Littleton cul-de-sac last week - noises that could have been from a makeshift bomb factory.

By Tuesday evening Brooks Brown, for one, was seeing things clearly with the benefit of hindsight.

Harris "did it because he hated people," he said. "He loved the idea of killing people. That's how I knew it would end the way that this did."



Pupils help a distraught friend after being evacuated. The killers talked about guns and bombs at school

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Recipe for pipe bombs on Net

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN WASHINGTON

HOME-MADE "pipe bombs" like those left scattered around the Colorado school can be built at minimal cost using a recipe available on the Internet, according to US police who describe bomb-making as a growing craze among American teenagers.

The 30 or more bombs found by police searching Columbine High School were made from such easily obtainable household items as propane, petrol and soap.

Hundreds of books and manuals, as well as many Internet sites, provide instructions on how to combine the ingredients to make bombs that are easy to conceal and devastatingly powerful. A metal pipe bomb less than a foot long can contain enough explosive to kill at a range of 400ft.

More than a third of bomb-related incidents in the US involve juveniles with home-made devices. Attempts to re-

strict the flow of bomb-making information have run foul of the First Amendment, which guarantees freedom of speech.

Internet discussion groups routinely exchange tips on bomb-making, and one site offers instructions on "bleach bombs", "jug bombs" and letter bombs.

"There's a lot of information on the Internet, home recipes and such, and there's nothing much we can do about it," Dan Boek, of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, said recently after a pipe bomb had been placed by two teenagers outside a state police barracks in Indiana.

Last year local authorities in Washington DC issued a pamphlet offering tips on how to spot if a child is a secret bomb-maker. "Generally these teenagers excel at academic activities," the pamphlet said.

FBI alerted to bomb website

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

AMERICA Online contacted the FBI yesterday about the content posted on its service by one of the gunmen in the Colorado school massacre.

A search had shown that Eric Harris maintained a website through AOL, an Internet service provider, that included two pages about making pipe bombs and other explosives.

But Kim McCreery, an AOL spokeswoman, said that there was no immediate evidence that anyone had posted warnings on the Internet before the shootings.

She was responding to what had been considered a warning on another member's profile that said: "Preparin' for the big April 20. You'll all be sorry that day." She pointed out that after big news events members' profiles often flooded with hoaxes.

At the scene of the shootings, a Sheriff's spokesman, Steve Davis, said that police had been unable to find a

Trenchcoat Mafia

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DENVER SHOOTING: THE GUN DEBATE

Clinton avoids weapons issue

FROM BEN MACINTYRE
IN WASHINGTON

In an emotional speech evoking the "horror and agony" of the Colorado massacre yesterday, Bill Clinton pointedly avoided any reference to gun control, knowing only too well the bitter passions aroused by attempts to restrain America's enduring love affair with guns.

The Clinton presidency has scored some notable successes in its efforts to control guns, but it has also been exposed to the full rage of the pro-gun lobby and the strength of the nation's ingrained attachment to firearms.

Administration officials concede that any programme for the radical overhaul of US gun laws, such as Britain's clampdown on weapons following the Dunblane massacre, is doomed to failure. Recent efforts to introduce legislation, such as a Bill to close the loophole that allows private individuals to sell weapons at gun shows without carrying out background checks, have been rebuffed by the Republican-dominated congress.

Rather than raise the incen-

diary issue of restricting gun ownership or sales, Mr Clinton has instead blamed the Denver massacre on "violent images and experiences that warp young perspectives and obscure the consequences of violence".

"In the days ahead we will do all we can to see what else we can do," he said, with a studied vagueness borne of repeated and painful clashes over gun-control.

Although a native of Arkansas, where gun-ownership is close to a religion and children

of any age can own rifles or shotguns, Mr Clinton has earned the undying enmity of the gun lobby with his efforts to bring in weapons legislation.

Last year, after the playground killings in Jonesboro, Arkansas, he banned the import of 58 types of assault weapons in a major blow to the National Rifle Association (NRA), which accused the president of "bending the law".

"There are still too many children in harm's way. You don't need an Uzi to go deer

hunting and you don't need an AK-47 to go skeet shooting. These are weapons of war, they are not needed for a day in the country," Mr Clinton said.

The order, which immediately prevented 1.5 million high-powered guns from coming onto the US market, followed two earlier efforts to outlaw the guns. A 1989 ban by president George Bush and another by Mr Clinton in 1994 founded when manufacturers made minute modifications to the weapons, allowing them to

be classified as sporting rifles.

Mr Clinton was also responsible for pushing through the highly controversial Brady Bill in 1993, the first successful effort to regulate guns for 25 years, which required a five-day waiting period following the purchase of a handgun to allow police checks.

The bill was named after former White House press secretary James Brady, the living symbol of the campaign for greater gun control, who was permanently disabled in the attempted assassination of Ron-

ald Reagan in 1981. The White House says the measure has prevented at least 250,000 "unsuitable" Americans with criminal, mental or drug records from obtaining guns — although part of the bill was later struck down by the Supreme Court.

The NRA and other pro-gun lobbying groups insist such efforts represent a direct infringement of the constitutional "right to keep and bear arms". But Mr Clinton has also come under fire from groups demanding tougher restrictions, who claim that a general ban on specific classes of weapons would have far more effect than a "piecemeal" approach.

US Attorney General Janet Reno yesterday argued that stricter gun control laws were not a complete solution to youth violence. "We've got to make sure young people have the counseling, the support, to help them come to grips with the anger of their life," she said.

Meanwhile, announcing his candidacy for President yesterday, conservative Gary Bauer, a fierce opponent of gun control, ascribed the Colorado killings to moral degeneration

HOLLYWOOD VETERAN SEEKS HOMELY IMAGE FOR GUN CAMPAIGNERS



Heston: says handguns help to prevent crime

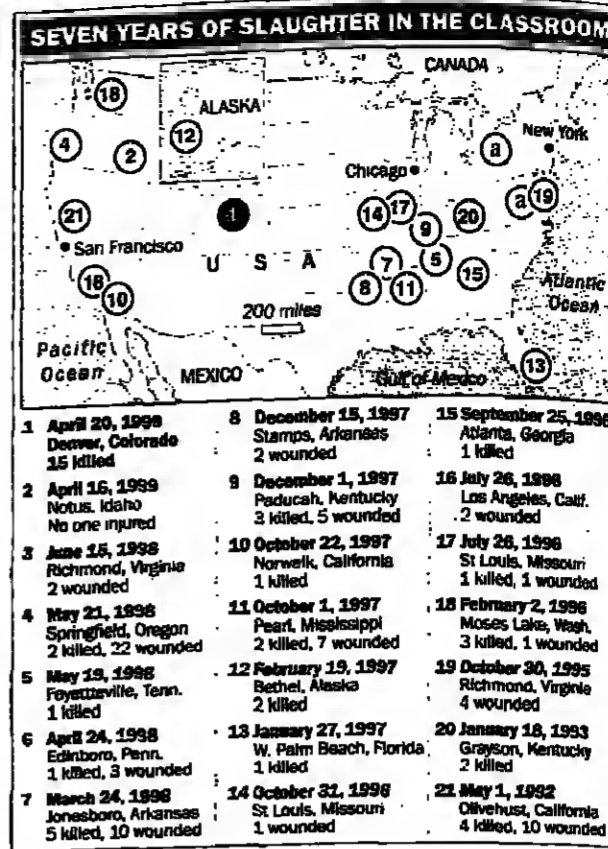
Washington: Charlton Heston is leading the National Rifle Association's charm offensive (Jan Brodie writes). The idea is to show that the lobby group is made up of ordinary folk who are just trying to defend their constitutional freedoms, including the right to bear arms.

The best way to deter crime is to allow law-abiding citizens to carry handguns, the Hollywood star, 74, says. Giving people the right to carry concealed weapons creates a "climate of uncertainty" for criminals. "In a world where the wolves can't tell the lions from the sheep, the entire flock is safe."

But school shootings are making things harder for pro-gun campaigns. Yesterday, after the Colorado massacre, the NRA was not returning calls. Its

critics were out in force. "The NRA is slowly losing ground, but is still very powerful," said Osha Gray Davidson, author of a critique of the organisation. He thinks its claimed membership of three million is inflated by hundreds of thousands. According to Handgun Control, which campaigns for laws to curb guns, the NRA spent \$3.4 million (£2.12 million) in support of pro-gun candidates in last November's Congressional elections.

Even without the NRA, guns would be part of American life, as they have been through the Wars of Independence, the Civil War, the taming of the frontier, and despite the rule of the Mafia and inner-city drugs networks. Violence, in films and television, is at the heart of much of today's popular culture.



Bloody start to 'era of peace'

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN WASHINGTON

THE bloodshed in Colorado comes just weeks after Richard Riley, US Education Secretary, hailed a new era of peace in the country's schools, citing measures to combat youth violence and bring greater community involvement by parents and teachers.

A 1997 survey found that one in five high school students had recently carried a gun, but the Littleton killings were the first at school since last July. Then a Florida man shot his wife, a teacher, before shooting himself.

Last October, after six school killings in a year left 14 dead, President Clinton convened a conference on youth violence. In April a plan was unveiled to award more than \$300 million (£186 million) to communities to prevent such violence by stopping truancy, courses on resolving conflicts, new security

equipment and promoting after-school activities.

The programme also included \$80 million for hiring community police officers and \$40 million for counselling youths deemed most at risk. Some Republicans claimed that the steps were merely a sign of the President "pandering" for votes before congressional elections.

Three weeks ago the Government began accepting applications for the funds. Janet Reno, US Attorney-General, said: "When law enforcement works in partnership with our schools and our health professionals and with parents and the whole community, we can prevent violence."

Carolyn McCarthy, a Democratic Congress member, has been pushing for a Bill to require child-locks on handguns and the revoking of the licences of dealers selling weapons to minors.

England's saint a cover for fascists

BY STEWART TENDLER
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

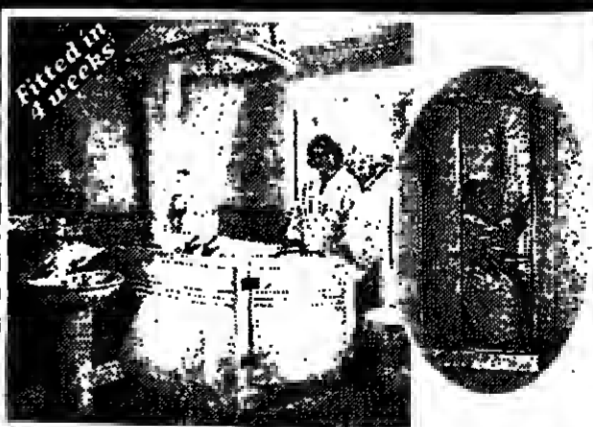
CELEBRATING Hitler's birthday has become a low-key affair for Britain's neo-Nazis. According to Gerry Gable, publisher of *Searchlight*, which monitors the extreme Right, there are probably no more than 500 members of the British National Party who mark the occasion in the back bar of a friendly pub or the function room of a small hotel.

Searchlight estimates that

the day might also be marked by about 50 members of Combat 18, which claimed to have planted the Brixton nail bomb last weekend.

Some groups use St George's Day, this Friday, as a cover to celebrate the Führer's birthday. At least two private meetings and socials are being planned this weekend at hotels in Lancashire and the Midlands. Mr Gable said one businessman who lives in Suffolk was well-known for his annual parties.

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حزبنا الوطن

DENVER SHOOTING: CULTURE OF VIOLENCE

Gloomy tribal craze that was born in Britain

THE goth sub-culture from which Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris emerged began in Britain among the followers of doom-laden, post-punk rock bands.

It has grown to embrace a plethora of diverse youth tribes including devil worshippers and followers of vampirism. When adolescents started dyeing their hair black and painting their faces white at the beginning of the 1980s they were just deemed a little odd, but a threat to no one.

They were particularly prevalent in Leeds for some reason, and then began to colonise the pokier corners of London. They enjoyed being gloomy, moping around in darkened rooms by day listening to dreary songs swamped by heavy guitars and drums.

They then emerged at night, clad in black, to attend the bands' concerts. They were more likely to be university students who had overdone on Shelley or Edgar Allan Poe than seriously anti-social crazies.

As the movement spread to America more and more fringe groups emerged. There are dozens of goth websites containing long, rambling explanations of goth culture. "Generally the personality of a goth is kind of dark," says one typical site. "There is some focus on death, but once again we are not trying to be evil. We

Damian Whitworth on the origins of a sub-culture exported to America

live in a society that shuns the thought of death. Goths are not obsessed with death. They just don't fear it."

There have been persistent claims that many American teenagers have developed a fascination with bloody medieval behaviour after becoming obsessed with fantasy role-playing games such as Dungeons and Dragons. Sessions can last for days as the wildest and goriest dreams are fulfilled by the roll of a dice.

The gothic lifestyle and role-playing games became the subject of sometimes hysterical national debate after the "vampire murders" of 1996 in which a suburban Florida couple were killed by teenage members of a vampire cult.

The gang had become involved in vampirism after steeping themselves in a role-playing game called Vampire: the Masquerade. Andy Grieser, the author of a book on blood drinkers, said that thou-

sands were involved in vampirism. There has been huge controversy too about Marilyn Manson, the androgynous male singer and high priest of goth, who professes Satanic sympathies and is reported to have been a favourite of Klebold and Harris.

The black trenchcoats that the two killers apparently wore all the time, rain or shine, may also be significant and indicate that the boys had strayed to the outer reaches of society. Trenchcoats are used as a symbol of Nazism on a number of websites and fellow students have attested that the boys expressed white supremacist views.

One said: "They always have the neo-Nazi look, so we were talking about them and Hitler's birthday even before the shooting started. Everybody knew it was Hitler's birthday."

On one website a skeleton can be seen dancing above a fire and the words "The Trenchcoat". A poem includes the lines: "There will be no performance today/There will be no curtain call/He can no longer perform for you/So witness the grandest spectacle of all/It's a one-night engagement/So make your way to the front/It's the death of a jester/It's one dead man's show/There are no mourners today/Only spectators at the scene/Relishing in this bizarre event..."



Heavy metal star Marilyn Manson, who named himself after Charles Manson

DiCaprio role as killer in trenchcoat

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

IN the film the carnage was all a dream. But the grim reality of the Colorado shootings has focused fresh attention on the controversial movie *The Basketball Diaries*.

The film includes a dream sequence in which a former high-school basketball player, played by Leonardo DiCaprio, opens fire on children and teachers. DiCaprio is seen wearing a black trenchcoat similar to those that were worn by the suspects at Columbine High School.

The movie is already the subject of a \$130 million (£80 million) suit brought by families who claim that it inspired the shooting at a Kentucky high school in 1997 in which a 14-year-old boy killed three pupils. Michael Carneal has said that he was partly inspired by the film to attack a prayer group.

Seagram and Sony, makers of violent video games that Carneal enjoyed playing, have also been named in the suit, which is seeking \$30 million in compensation and \$100 million in punitive damages.



Poster for film linked to youth violence

In a separate case, the family of a woman who claims she was the victim of a copycat shooting inspired by Oliver Stone's film *Natural Born Killers* were given permission to sue the director. The Supreme Court rejected Mr Stone's claim that the film was protected by constitutional free-speech rights.



DiCaprio as he appears in *Basketball Diaries*

Cult following of rock star who apes serial killer

BY ELIZABETH JUDGE

MARILYN MANSON is a heavy metal star and self-styled "anti-Christ" with a cult following in America and Britain.

His band's official website includes a "Shrine to Marilyn Manson" page and a "Marilyn Manson Alt". Visitors to the site can join the "I hate God" web-ring. Yesterday messages left by people who

had logged on included "Manson is God and I am sick of people judging him," and "I would do anything for Manson".

Manson, 31, was born in Ohio as Brian Warner but renamed himself after the murderer Charles Manson. Other members of the four-strong band, which is based in Florida, are named after a child-killer, a murderer and a stalker. Their last British concert, at the Bridon Acad-

emy in December, was a sell-out. The group are appearing at Glastonbury this year and will perform alongside the rock group Metallica at a one-day event at Milton Keynes in July.

On their first tour to Britain in 1996, they were not made to feel so welcome. Their reputation had preceded them, with rumours of animal sacrifices and lurid sex acts being part of their show. Westminster

Council would not let them use a venue in the borough.

The last of the three albums Manson has released, *Mechanical Animals*, has sold more than two million copies in America. One of the songs includes the line: "And I was a hand grenade that never stopped exploding. You were automatic and as hollow as the 'o' in God."

Last year, Manson, who is engaged to the actress Rose McGowan, published his autobiography, *The Long Hard Road out of Hell*, an account of a dysfunctional American outsider who becomes a superstar.

John Harris, Editor of *Select* music magazine, said it would be wrong to ban Manson's music: "It would be totally wrong to link the music with the killings in Denver. I am sure those children eat burgers as well but we would not ban them."

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Widow's record £7m goes to the dogs

By Christine Middel

A CHELSEA widow has left £7 million to the Canine Defence League. It is the biggest single legacy left to an animal charity.

Her executor, Neil Eastwood, said that Nora Fielden Hecksher, 80, who had no children, was "a very charming lady who loved dogs. Despite her wealth she lived frugally and was more interested in the comfort of dogs than herself."

National Canine Defence League director Siobhan Lavelle said the charity was "absolutely stunned and moved" by the generous bequest.

She said the charity would use the money to help to achieve its aim of ensuring that no healthy dog in Britain was destroyed. The league received £13 million from donations last year, and its largest bequest had previously been nearly £500,000.

Mrs Hecksher's personal wealth grew from a trust fund established by her Liverpool-based family, who were in the animal feed industry. She had always loved dogs and had adopted many from the Battersea Dogs' Home.

Charity begins with the rich in hard times

Alexander Frean reports on the agencies that seek out philanthropic millionaires

CHARITIES are spending thousands of pounds buying access to confidential lists of millionaires in an attempt to reverse the decline in individual giving.

Firms that specialise in tracking down people capable of making donations of up to £500,000 report a growing interest in their services from voluntary organisations of all sizes. They can provide details of people's wealth, interests and family circumstances, enabling charities to target those most likely to be sympathetic to their causes.

Since the advent of the National Lottery five years ago, there has been a 31 per cent drop in personal donations to charity. Average monthly gifts have fallen from £10.08 in 1993 to £8.54.

Andrew Thomas, chief executive of Charity Consultants, which has a database of around 40,000 potential donors, said there was an art to extracting money from the rich. "The first thing to remember is, don't ask for too little. In the ten years I have been in this business I have only twice had someone give more than was asked for."

He said that charities often had no idea how many very

rich donors they already had on their mailing lists. One major charity had been surprised recently to receive a cheque for £500,000 from an individual supporter after it had made an emergency relief appeal through a routine mail shot.

On another occasion, when asked to analyse a charity's mailing list of 80,000 names, Mr Thomas discovered, much to the charity's surprise, that it contained at least 700 individuals capable of making gifts of up to £500,000.

Mr Thomas, who addressed the annual Charityfair conference in London yesterday, advises charities not to write begging letters but to engineer meetings with potential donors, either by approaching them through a well-placed contact or inviting them to a

champagne reception at a gallery or museum, or an open day at the charity's head office.

The best potential donors are those brought up in the 1960s and 1970s. They have a strong desire to "help the world", Mr Thomas says and include self-made millionaires and those at a crossroads in their lives.

Robin Jones from The Factory, the Bristol-based fundraising consultants, said it was important for charities to approach only individuals known to have an interest in their cause.

His company compiles profiles of likely donors by monitoring the press, the Internet and company reports, and scouring *Debrett's Peerage* and *Who's Who*.

Caroline Abrahams of the National Children's Bureau, which is hiring a donor fundraiser, said: "Targeting major donors is a fairly cost effective way of raising money."

A spokeswoman for Oxfam said that it had hired a specialist firm to analyse its existing mailing list and identify potential donors. "It is of limited use, but it does work. This year we received a donation of nearly £1 million. It was a very nice surprise."



The 600-year-old bonsai tree that once adorned the Japanese emperor's hotel room

Imperial bonsai may fetch £50,000 at Sotheby's

By Robin Young

THE ancient art of bonsai is to return to the London auction rooms for the first time in more than a century, with one miniature tree expected to fetch about £50,000 when it is sold in June.

The 600-year-old yew, *Taxus cuspidata*, is known as "The tree of the emperor's gaze". It became well known at the end of the last century when it was placed in a room in the Oturu Hotel used by the Japanese emperor when he visited Hokkaido island to inspect the herring catch.

The tree is a *yamadori*, a naturally stunted specimen originally collected from the wild in the mountains. *Yamadori* are rare and valuable now that restrictions have been placed on collecting specimens and most bonsai are raised by painstaking horticultural techniques designed to mimic the effects of growing where trees are exposed to the elements in rocky or craggy mountain regions.

Mark Hill, bonsai expert at Sotheby's, the auction house that is staging the sale on June 17 as part of its Asia Week, said yesterday that a £50,000 value would probably represent the top end of the bonsai market in Europe.

□ <http://www.sothebys.com> is the Sotheby's website.

How modern trees took root

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

THE tree that dominated the Earth's forests 370 million years ago had almost all the characteristics of its modern equivalents, scientists have discovered.

Specimens found recently in the Moroccan Sahara show that *Archaeopteris* had huge roots, a branching trunk, lateral buds on both branch and trunk, and could live for more than a century. The sum of knowledge about the extinct tree had previously been small because researchers had only been able to study pieces of its trunk.

Archaeopteris is now known to have been a large conifer-like tree, growing to 60 feet or more, but its leaves were like those of ferns and it spread by releasing spores. It made up to 90 per cent of the forests in the late Devonian period, when plants greatly reduced carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere and boosted the levels of oxygen. "Archaeopteris made the world almost a modern

world in terms of ecosystems that surround us now," Professor Stephen Schekler of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University said in *Nature*.

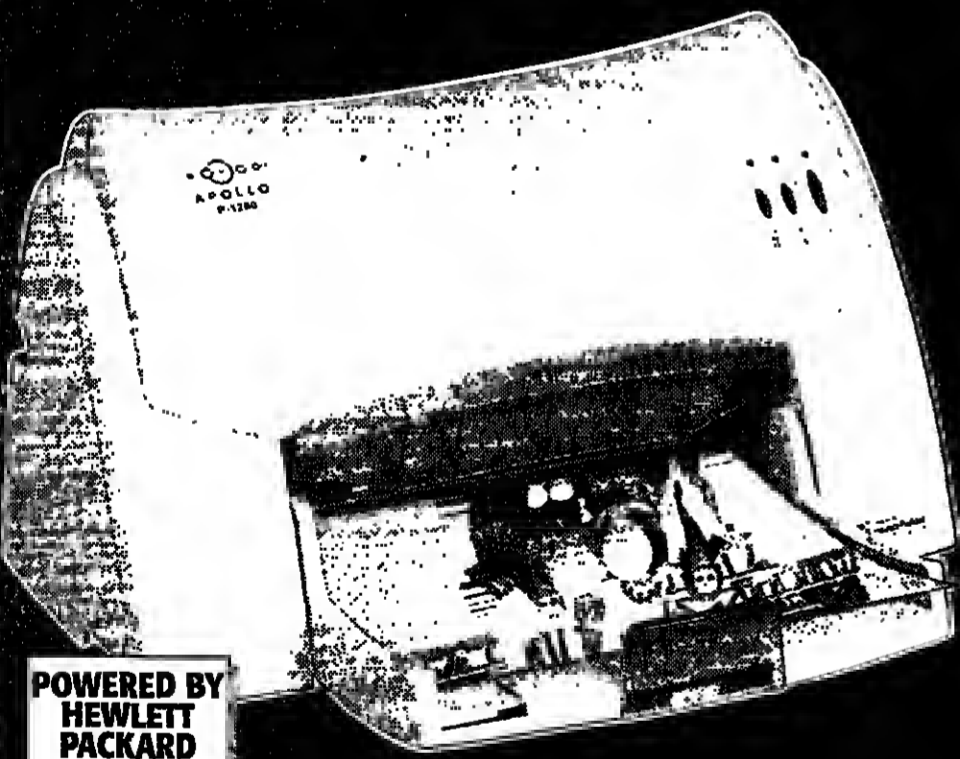
Professor Schekler, Dr Brigitte Meyer-Berthold of the University of Montpellier and Dr John Wood of the University of Tübingen sent to Morocco last year to look for specimens.

"In three days, we filled a truck," he said. "It was the first time we had seen trunk branching on *Archaeopteris*, and we found hundreds of examples. And we also found big roots, which had previously been mostly conjecture."

The trees had lateral buds that enabled them to keep growing when its leading tip died, a feature unique among plants of that era. It was also the longest-living of its time.

"Other plants ran out of ability to grow," Professor Schekler said. "These trees could grow for 100 years or more."

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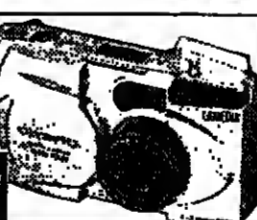
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Silcott ally's trouble with the law

THE SILCOTT FILE



WINSTON Silcott was jailed for life for the murder of PC Keith Blacklock, who died after receiving 42 knife and machete wounds in the Broadwater Farm riots. PC Blacklock, 40, had three children. Silcott's conviction was quashed by the Court of Appeal in 1991 after tests suggested that police might have fabricated evidence against him. He received about £17,000 compensation for his wrongful conviction. In 1988 Silcott had been convicted of the murder of Anthony Smith, 22, a boxer, during a fight at a party. He claimed he had acted in self-defence. The Criminal Cases Review Commission last year declined a request from Silcott's lawyers to refer the Smith case to the Court of Appeal on the ground of fresh evidence.

Convicted rapist claims repeated arrests are racial harassment by police. Dominic Kennedy reports

A LEADING member of the campaign to secure Winston Silcott's freedom, who has accused the police of racial harassment, has another reason why officers might regard him in an unfavourable light. Fifteen years ago Delroy Lindo, then a newly married disc jockey, was jailed for 30 months by an Old Bailey judge for rape.

But is that enough to explain why Mr Lindo has had to go to court to fight nine minor charges in the past three years, and been cleared of every one of them, or is Mr Lindo, now a 39-year-old father-of-three, justified in his claim that he has been persistently arrested by officers in a brutal campaign of victimisation for publicly supporting his childhood friend?

Mr Lindo says he has been harassed by the police since he began supporting Silcott, who was convicted of murdering PC Keith Blacklock in the Broadwater Farm riots in 1985 but was cleared on appeal eight years ago.

A year before the constable's death, Mr Lindo had been imprisoned for the rape of a 20-year-old typist. Could this be a reason for the police's scrutiny?

Mr Lindo has become one of the loudest voices against police racism. In February he delivered a petition to Downing Street as part of an anti-racism march, and he has helped to organise demonstrations against

the force. He has issued a writ against the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Sir Paul Condon, alleging malicious prosecution, assault and false imprisonment, which Scotland Yard has said it will defend.

Is it because of his high-profile campaigning against the police that Mr Lindo has been stopped 11 times and had to go to court on six occasions during the past three years?

He has been acquitted of nine offences, including breach of the peace, threatening behaviour, assault, criminal damage, obstruction and having an illegible car numberplate. His wife, Sonia, 37, a housing officer, was cleared of breaching the peace.

Mr Lindo's case has been highlighted in the national, local and ethnic minority press. The *Independent* on Sunday devoted an article to his complaints in September under the headline "Who'd Be Silcott's Friend?". The *Weekly Gleaner*, a newspaper for the West Indian community, described Mr and Mrs Lindo as the victims of a police hate campaign.

Neighbours distressed by seeing the couple arrested outside their home in Hornsey, North London, wrote to Sir Paul about "a case of total harassment on the part of the police". The letter said: "They are lovely people, totally distraught at what is going on."

During the 1980s, Mr Lindo and Silcott ran a mobile discotheque. Mr Lindo was jailed in 1984 for raping the typist on the day he returned from his honeymoon. The Old Bailey judge said it was a nasty attack, aggravated by violence and sexual indignities.



Delroy and Sonia Lindo with supporters outside the court where he was cleared of his ninth charge in three years

According to a trial report in a North London weekly newspaper, Mr Lindo grabbed the woman at a disco, took her to a

school playing field, hit her and raped her. Mr Lindo said she had invented the allegation to get revenge on him for marrying her.

After the riots on the Broadwater Farm estate in Tottenham, the police arrested Silcott, who was already on bail for the murder of Anthony Smith, a boxer, and he was accused of killing PC Black-

lock. "I knew nothing about campaigning but I just knew I had to do something to help my friend," Mr Lindo, an unemployed housing official, said recently. "I started campaigning for him. I became a target from then."

The spate of arrests in the past three years coincided with a period when Mr Lindo was the driving force behind Silcott's unsuccessful campaign to be cleared of the Smith murder, for which he is serving life.

This week a jury at Wood Green Crown Court, North London, took 50 minutes to deliver a unanimous verdict that Mr Lindo's two-day trial for dangerous driving.

Afterwards, asked about his rape conviction, Mr Lindo said: "That's got nothing to do with it. Why would they want to target me for anything to do with that? They arrested me for the riots, didn't they?" "It's just unbelievable that

you could be fishing around, to be trying to discredit me in such a way now. They have made it quite clear at the police station and during arrest that it is about Winston Silcott. My wife has no convictions at all. Why her?"

Mr Lindo has a point. His criminal record is legally spent and he has not been in trouble for 12 years. No one else in the area has been arrested and subsequently acquitted so frequently. So why does it keep happening?

There is speculation that senior police officers are now keen to avoid more wrangles with Mr Lindo, and there may be an out-of-court settlement of his writ. Meanwhile, Silcott is as firmly behind bars as ever.

A spokesman for the Metropolitan Police said yesterday: "There are currently outstanding complaints. There is still an outstanding civil action. No date has been decided for a hearing."

Adulterous officer loses sex bias case

By HELEN JOHNSTONE

A SENIOR officer dismissed from the Army after an adulterous affair with a high-ranking Wren, who has since been recommended for promotion, was not a victim of sexual discrimination, an employment tribunal ruled yesterday.

The tribunal found that a woman Army officer behaving in the same way would have faced the same punishment. Keith Pople, 42, a lieutenant-colonel, appeared before a military court last April after a three-year affair with the Wren, whom he met while they were both working at the Ministry of Defence in Whitehall. He was later sacked, despite

being acquitted of scandalous conduct or conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline. The tribunal, at Southampton, had been told that the 34-year-old Wren, who cannot be named for legal reasons, had kept her job because the Royal Navy adopted a more lenient approach than the Army to social misconduct. After the ruling, Mr Pople's solicitor expressed deep disappointment that the defence ministry had managed to defeat the claim on technical grounds. Lawyers for the Defence Secretary had argued that each of the Services has individual powers over its personnel.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Sellafield plutonium missing in Irish Sea

More than a third of the plutonium released into the sea from the Sellafield nuclear complex in Cumbria seems to have disappeared.

It had been assumed that the plutonium was trapped in sediments in the Irish Sea, but radioactivity monitoring shows a "shortfall" that represents 36 per cent of the plutonium released. Scientists believe that it may have been trapped in sand or washed to Scotland and Scandinavia.

Murdoch Baxter, former director of the International Atomic Energy Agency's Marine Environment Laboratory, told *New Scientist* that the discrepancies were "disappointing". "Having made these excessive releases into the nearshore environment of a populated area... they claimed for decades that almost all the plutonium had remained in Irish Sea sediments," he said.

A spokesman for British Nuclear Fuels, which runs the plant, said that to get figures in match so closely over such a long period was a good result.

Verdict of killing

Eric Nicholls, 64, a former mechanic of Southampton, Berkshire, was jailed for 30 months for the manslaughter of a neighbour Anthony James, 82, a retired major, whom he beat with a walking stick.

Murder remand

Harry Pennells, 74, a former lorry driver, of Titchhurst, East Sussex, was remanded in custody accused of murdering an unknown woman, whose beated body was found in Bedbury Forest, Kent, in 1979.

Sex charges

Five men have been charged with indecent assault against former pupils of Stonyhurst College near Clitheroe in Lancashire, a leading Roman Catholic public school. Police predict further arrests.

Body in pond

The naked body of a man, badly beaten about the head, has been found in a pond at Blest, Oxfordshire. Police said the unidentified man, in his late 20s, had been in the pond for only a few days.

Crazy comeback

The Osmonds are in talks to play in Britain after a Virgin Atlantic advertising campaign used their 1972 hit *Crazy Horses* as a backing track. The American group also plans to re-release the single.

Carpet cleans up

A 1300-year-old scrap of carpet has fetched £29,900 at Bonhams in London. The 18-square remnant, found on a Cairo dump, is dirty and holed but is one of the oldest specimens of its kind.

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NEWS IN BRIEF
Sellafield plutonium missing in Irish Sea

Birthday Queen is the toast of Korea

Hosts make a song and dance of the celebrations, writes Alan Hamilton

THE Queen celebrated her 73rd birthday yesterday with a trip to the countryside, a glass of rice wine, an armful of trinkets and an airline lunch of cold beef. Like most women her age, she said she didn't want a fuss.

But she did not escape entirely scot-free. At a concert in Seoul last night Lesley Garrett, the Doncaster diva, accompanied by a choir of Korean schoolchildren, sang a surprise rendition of *Happy Birthday*, and the Queen looked genuinely touched, smiling and nodding her approval with the hint of a tear in her eye.

When she subsequently appeared on stage with her guest, President Kim Dae Jung, to meet the performers, the packed house of 1,700 Britons and Koreans rose and gave her a full minute's standing ovation, which she acknowledged with a warm and broad smile. "Thank you very much: that was lovely," she said to Ms Garrett.

Earlier, on the third day of her state visit to Korea, the Queen escaped the traffic and smog of Seoul, flying 150 miles south to the preserved heritage village of Hahoe, which despite its primary function as a tourist magnet still has a permanent population of 290. There has been a settlement here since about the time Caesar first visited Britain.

Ushered into the open courtyard of a traditional wooden house, the Queen met the occupant, Ryu Young-Ha, whose family has lived there for generations. Several of Mr Ryu's female relatives squatted on the ground amid an array of clay pots and bowls.

One was preparing a vat of kimchi, a wicked pickle of cabbage, chilli and garlic. "It preserves the food, does it?" asked the Queen, her nose wrinkling imperceptibly. It also preserves a respectful distance between the kimchi eater and those who enjoy fresh air.

Followed by her entourage, the Queen was directed into the inner apartments of the house — but not before being gently reminded to take off her



Villagers awaiting the arrival of the Queen in Hahoe

shoes. Inside, she sat at a table laid for tea; although she was not offered any.

Up the crowded village street and past an ox-ploughing demonstration, the Queen was welcomed at the Talking House, the equivalent of the village hall, by a troupe of masked dancers performing a short version of a three-hour satire on medieval rural life.

The village had wanted to lay on a full-scale birthday celebration, but the Queen's advance party had insisted that she wanted something simple. Villagers carried out a birthday table groaning with sweetmeats, savouries, rice and almond cakes, a miniature tree dripping with candies — all the fare of an important Korean birthday, usually celebrated at 60 or 70.

Kim Jong-Heung, one of the masked dancers, was chosen to do the honours as he too was celebrating a birthday — his 46th. He poured two gold cups of rice wine and toasted the Queen with *Seang chin chuka hamnida*, Korean for *Happy Birthday*. "You too," his guest replied, and the crowd applauded.

After a brief stop at a wholesale fruit and vegetable market, the Queen left with a gift of a basket of fruit including local apples. Next she went to a hilltop Buddhist monastery, for no reason other than it was there. The chief monk, the Venerable Moon-In, led the Queen up 13 steep stone steps to view his three golden Buddhas and

Last year the Queen, who once restricted her autograph to state documents, signed a Manchester United football; yesterday she signed the inside of a glazed clay roof tile. It is to be placed atop the monastery, part of which is the oldest wooden structure in Korea.

By the time she left the monastery, the Queen had collected birthday gifts of lucky leather pouches, a jewelled leather traditional crown, a basket of fruit, a green vase, a scroll of calligraphy and a wooden mask from the play.

The Duke of Edinburgh, whose private birthday gift remains unknown, missed the earlier part of his wife's day. He travelled north of Seoul to the demilitarised zone at Panmunjom, where the ceasefire to end the Korean war was signed in 1953.

As he surveyed the landscape, loudspeakers in the distance blared rousing totalitarian marching music. Not a patch on the super soprano from Yorkshire.



The Queen and a Hahoe village dancer, also celebrating his birthday, drink a toast of rice wine from gold cups

A world away from Windsor

By TIM REID

A SOUTH KOREAN hamlet is not the strangest place the Queen has celebrated a birthday. In 1970 she found herself being toasted by villagers on a tiny island in the Coral Sea.

That birthday, her 44th, fell during a five-week Australian tour and was one of several far livelier and more exotic affairs than her favoured method of celebration — a family dinner at Windsor Castle. Perhaps her most unforgettable foreign birthday was the one she spent in Cape Town in 1947 on her first official overseas visit.

The young Princess was in South Africa with her father, George VI, during a tour to thank the Commonwealth for its war effort. In a memorable broadcast from Cape Town, on her 21st birthday,

she dedicated her life to the service of her people.

Three years later, accompanied by her husband, Princess Elizabeth marked her 24th birthday by watching him score the first goal in a polo match in Valletta, Malta. Maltese flags and Union Jacks decorated the streets, and hundreds of bouquets were sent to the birthday girl from British warships and villagers on the island.

But in 1970, on the Australian coral Green Island, the Duke of Edinburgh raised a few eyebrows when he told a persistent photographer that he had been running around "like a blue-arsed fly". It did not dampen things too much. The Queen was still greeted by a chorus of *Happy Birthday* from reporters.

TODAY IN SECTION 2

Books: *Secrets of the Royal Family* by John Gorton. In the cellar, the story of a historic, five-year-old wine cellar. *Enigma* by Michael Chabon. When They Lay Down. Books, pages 42-43.

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Airlines fear tourist revolt as delays rise

AIRLINES yesterday issued a warning of "chaos and catastrophe" across Europe this summer as they accused the international air traffic control service of causing huge delays.

Carriers including British Airways fear a wave of airport protests similar to those already seen in Spain, where passengers have refused to leave aircraft and even threatened to kidnap a pilot.

Delays to flights are at their worst and airlines predict that hold-ups this year will easily exceed those of the 1980s, when millions of passengers were stranded at airports.

Controllers claim that, because equipment in several countries is so decrepit, delays are the only way to maintain acceptable safety levels.

The first signs of the crisis emerged as one of Europe's biggest airlines, the Spanish carrier Iberia, announced that it was cancelling 16,000 flights to avoid huge delays in coming months.

The airline called on other carriers, including British charter firms taking more than five million tourists abroad, to boycott Spanish airspace because of the air traffic control problems.

It appeared yesterday, however, that airlines would stick to their flight plans, risking

**Air controllers
blamed for
runway chaos,
report Giles
Tremlett and
Arthur Leathley**

routine delays of three hours or more. Figures for the beginning of this year show a 44 per cent rise in the number of scheduled aircraft delayed by more than 15 minutes, with almost one in four flights held up in January.

The problems in dealing with record numbers of flights have reached crisis proportions, according to airlines that have experienced the biggest delays.

The Association of European Airlines, which represents 27 major airlines, including British Airways and British Midland, will tomorrow launch its own offensive to cut delays. It will demand that the central air traffic control service, based in Brussels, forces poor performers into line.

A meeting of Eurocontrol, the international air traffic control organisation based in

Brussels, will be told that the service is inefficient, with some radar equipment almost 30 years old. Airlines will demand that Eurocontrol takes on more powers to enforce improvements.

Karl-Heinz Neumeister, secretary general of the Association of European Airlines, said: "We will have catastrophe on the sun belt to the Mediterranean this summer. Already we are seeing a huge increase in delays and air traffic control services are nowhere near their targets for reducing delays."

Delays are expected to be exacerbated by the decision to close air space over Italy to accommodate Nato forces involved in the Kosovo conflict. Some of the most important air traffic control services in Europe, in Geneva, Zurich, Marseilles and Padua, Italy, are causing the worst delays.

Iberia said it would suspend 77 flights a day, or almost six per cent of its daily total. The move came after a number of airport rebellions by furious passengers on delayed flights.

In one rebellion, passengers called airport police and denounced the pilot for "kidnapping" after three hours on a runway. The Civil Guard had to board the aircraft after they threatened to lynch the pilot.



Cherie Blair, right, renews her acquaintance with Celia Larkin, Ireland's first lady, at the Women's Irish Network lunch at the Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park Hotel in London

NEWS IN BRIEF

Urgent Bill to shield IRA killers

Parliament is to rush through a Bill to make it impossible for courts to hear evidence obtained during the recovery of bodies of people murdered and buried by the IRA in the 1970s.

The Bill, to be introduced as early as tomorrow, will also establish an independent commission to act as an intermediary between the IRA and the authorities. It will offer amnesties to those responsible for the killings.

Last month the IRA said that it had found the unmarked graves of one of the "disappeared", but insisted on having the legislation passed before revealing their locations.

Chefs' GM ban

The television chefs Antonio Carluccio and Rose Gray joined other top chefs to launch a campaign against genetically modified food. They will display a logo on their restaurant windows and menus showing that they are avoiding GM produce in their cooking. The Greenpeace campaign may be extended to food served at airports, on trains and in schools.

Law chief order

John Morris, the Attorney-General, has been ordered to disclose details of the secret consultations preceding the appointment of Philip Sales as First Treasury Counsel. Mr Morris was given until April 30 by an employment tribunal, which is to hear a sex bias case, to reveal the "secret soundings" with the Lord Chancellor, Lord Chief Justice and Master of the Rolls.

Babies hobbled

Many babies are not learning to crawl and walk properly because they spend too many hours buckled into push-chairs, rockers or car seats, a University of Michigan study has found. Researchers said that children who had not been allowed enough time to practise crawling and kicking showed poor balance and co-ordination and were fatter than others.

Presenter dies

The woman whose voice was known to millions through the phrase "Are you sitting comfortably? Theo 171 begin", has died. Eileen Mitchell, who presented *Listen with Mother*, also sang many of the nursery rhymes in the programme on which she appeared for about 15 years. Mrs Mitchell died aged 76 at Sevenoaks Hospital, Kent, after a long battle with cancer.

Art prize shortlist

To the youngest shortlist for the NatWest Art Prize, Britain's largest art award, the 11 artists have an average age of just 32. More than 600 entries, the biggest field so far, were submitted for the award, which aims to foster technical skills. The winner, to be announced on June 15, receives £26,000 and the other finalists each take £1,000. Full details, *Metro*, Saturday

Lawrences sue five suspects for damages

By MICHAEL HARVEY AND STEWART TENDLER

THE parents of Stephen Lawrence launched a civil action for damages yesterday against the five men suspected of killing their son.

For the first time all five men could face detailed cross-examination under oath before a jury about their involvement in the murder six years ago at a bus stop in Eltham, southeast London.

A civil action means that any evidence would be tested by a lower burden of proof than in a criminal case.

Doreen and Neville Lawrence also issued writs in the High Court in London against the Metropolitan Police and Sir Paul Condon, the Commissioner, seeking compensation over the force's failed investigation of the killing.

The writs were issued the day before the sixth anniversary of Stephen's death and just within the time limit for launching civil actions.

The family's solicitor, Imran Khan, said: "I can confirm on behalf of Mr and Mrs Lawrence that I have today issued protective writs in the High Court against certain individuals considered to be responsible for the murder of Stephen Lawrence. This is for damages arising out of and in consequence of the murder of Stephen Lawrence."

arising out of and in consequence of the murder of Stephen Lawrence.

"I can also confirm that I have today issued a protective writ on behalf of Mr and Mrs Lawrence against the Metropolitan Police. The writ is for damages arising out of the failed investigation into the murder."

The writs have legal precedents. In 1991 the relatives of Lynn Siddons, 16, murdered in Derby in 1978, successfully sued Michael Brookes over the murder. The court awarded the family £10,000 and he was later convicted of killing the girl.

Three of the suspects in the Lawrence case — Neil Acourt, Luke Knight and Gary Dobson — were formally acquitted of the murder of Stephen three years ago when a private prosecution brought by the family collapsed. Under current law they cannot face further criminal charges for the murder. The case against Jamie Acourt and David Norris was dropped before it reached court. In theory they could still be tried.

Last night lawyers for the suspects said they had not received official notification.



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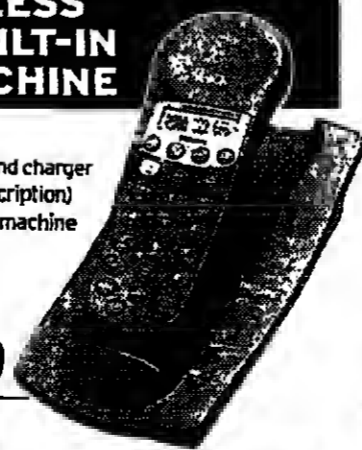
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NEWS IN BRIEF
Urgent Bill to shield IRA killers

Parliament is to pass a Bill to make it possible for courts to order the removal of bodies of people murdered and buried in the 1970s. The Bill, to be introduced as soon as tomorrow, will allow the Home Secretary to order the removal of bodies of people murdered and buried in the 1970s. The Bill, to be introduced as soon as tomorrow, will allow the Home Secretary to order the removal of bodies of people murdered and buried in the 1970s.

Chefs' GM ban
A new law will prevent chefs from working in restaurants and hotels if they are found to be under the influence of alcohol. The law will be introduced by the Home Secretary.

Law chief orders
The Home Secretary has ordered the Home Office to review the law on the death penalty. The review will be completed by the end of the year.

Babies hobbled
A new study has found that babies born to mothers who smoked during pregnancy are more likely to be born with physical disabilities. The study was conducted by the Home Office.

Senior dies
A senior member of the Home Office has died. The death was announced by the Home Secretary.

Write this
A new book has been published by the Home Office. The book is titled 'Write this' and is available for purchase.

Adopter
A new book has been published by the Home Office. The book is titled 'Adopter' and is available for purchase.

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A new book has been published by the Home Office. The book is titled 'at June' and is available for purchase.

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A new book has been published by the Home Office. The book is titled 'ie companies' and is available for purchase.

be a dead line
A new book has been published by the Home Office. The book is titled 'be a dead line' and is available for purchase.

Relatives stormed a ward to resuscitate this boy. Doctors say he should be left to die

Court asked to rule on parent's right to demand life-saving care, reports Michael Horsnell

RELATIVES of a profoundly disabled boy became involved in a violent dispute on a children's hospital ward when told that he should be allowed to die, a court was told yesterday. Doctors and police were injured in the fracas as the family tried to resuscitate him.

Carol Glass, 38, had been informed that her 12-year-old son, David, was dying and that "nature should be allowed to take its course" without medical intervention. She and about a dozen members of her family had gone to St Mary's Hospital in Portsmouth after learning that, against her wishes, doctors had been instructed by the chief executive of the Portsmouth NHS Trust to give David diamorphine, the heroin-based painkiller that can hasten death.

Their efforts to resuscitate David during the altercation "prevented him from dying", according to a statement from Mark Ashton, a consultant paediatrician. He said that in normal circumstances staff would have recommended that the family hold the child and calm him while he was allowed to die peacefully.

Instead, the family had pulled David from his bed to stimulate his breathing.



Carol Glass, concerned about future treatment

"Members of his family started blowing raspberries in his ears, hanging his chest, and rubbing his arms and legs very vigorously despite being asked not to," Dr Ashton said. "In my view this was extremely cruel. He should have been allowed to pass away peacefully and with dignity. It was not in his best interests simply to keep him alive."

However, Mr Justice Scott Baker was told in the High Court that far from dying, the boy survived and now plays with his sisters at home, laughs, smiles, responds to voices and light, and enjoys days out with his family.

Mrs Glass, from Portsmouth, who has three other children, has accused the trust of unlawfully acting contrary to her wishes. She is seeking a legal declaration to ensure that her son will be entitled to resuscitation and life-saving treatment if he needs to be re-admitted to hospital.

Richard Gordon, QC, for Mrs Glass, told the judge: "Clinicians at the trust came to the view as long ago as last July that it was in the child's best interests not to take active steps to keep him alive. The thrust of that view was that any life-saving treatment should be withheld and he should be allowed to die."

Two weeks ago a representative of the Official Solicitor, who is representing the boy in the case, visited him at his home. "We met David in his bedroom, sitting on the lap of one of his sisters," the court was told in a statement on behalf of the Official Solicitor. "We said, 'Hello.' His eyes were wide open and it was noticeable his head turned to the sound of voices."

David was born with hydrocephalus - water on the brain - which left him with blindness, spastic quadriplegia and severe learning difficulties. His mother describes his health as good and says he can eat and drink without a nasal tube. He has been admitted several times to St Mary's throughout his life but is now being cared for at home with the help of community services.



David Glass, while profoundly disabled, is said to play with his sisters, laugh, smile, respond to voices and enjoy days out with his family

raised about whether resuscitation should be provided. Mrs Glass had insisted that it should.

The fracas with the boy's family - the subject of a separate criminal case - had occurred in October, the day after staff had been instructed to prescribe diamorphine.

Mr Gordon said that because of the breakdown between the family and St Mary's Hospital, David would not be treated by Portsmouth NHS Trust again, but at a hospital in Southampton.

He emphasised that whatever the outcome of the case, it was "not an attempt to blame the doctors". Neither was it an attempt by Mrs Glass to "dictate to the clinicians whether and what treatment should be given to her son", or an attack on clinical judgment.

The object of the proceedings was "to ensure that the events that occurred in October" cannot happen again whenever or wherever the child is to be treated". He said that Mrs Glass had a legitimate concern about what would happen if a similar situation arose in another hospital and that the problem should be sorted out before it did.

Mr Gordon told the judge that in all cases in which doctors sought to withdraw treatment and allow a child to die without the consent of parents, hospitals should be required to seek the approval of the courts and continue to give emergency treatment until such approval had been obtained.

Andrew Hockton, appearing for the Official Solicitor, told the court: "Our concern is that the applicant [Mrs Glass] appears to be trying to impose some kind of legal and procedural strait-jacket on an area of the law that has been left for good reason in many cases, uncertain."

The hearing continues.

Her son's neck was broken in the accident last October. He spent three weeks at Frenchay Hospital in Bristol before being transferred to Gloucester Royal Hospital. Although he opened his eyes a week later, he had been motionless and unresponsive since, and doctors said that he could take years to recover.

Last week Lydney Colts, the under-19s side he played for, won the Gloucestershire County Cup by beating Cheltenham Colts 13-12. The following day, Mr Bendall's team-mates Mark Kiely, John Lewis and Lee Johnson took the cup with them on their weekly visit.

Mr Kiely, 19, said that he was speechless when his bed-ridden friend grabbed the cup. "Before the game we said we would win it for Tom because he was one of the main players in the team," he said. "It just shows how much his rugby meant to him."

Joe Willison, the manager of the hospital's head injury unit, said: "It's a gradual stage-by-stage process, but he is making good progress."

Teenager roused from coma by rugby triumph

BY SIMON DE BRUKELLES
SOUTH WEST
CORRESPONDENT

A TEENAGE rugby player who had been in a coma for six months reached out and grabbed a trophy that his team-mates brought to his hospital bedside.

Tom Bendall, 19, had shown little progress since being injured in a hit-and-run road accident, but when three friends showed him the cup that his team had won, the front-row forward raised his arms for the first time and took hold of the handle.

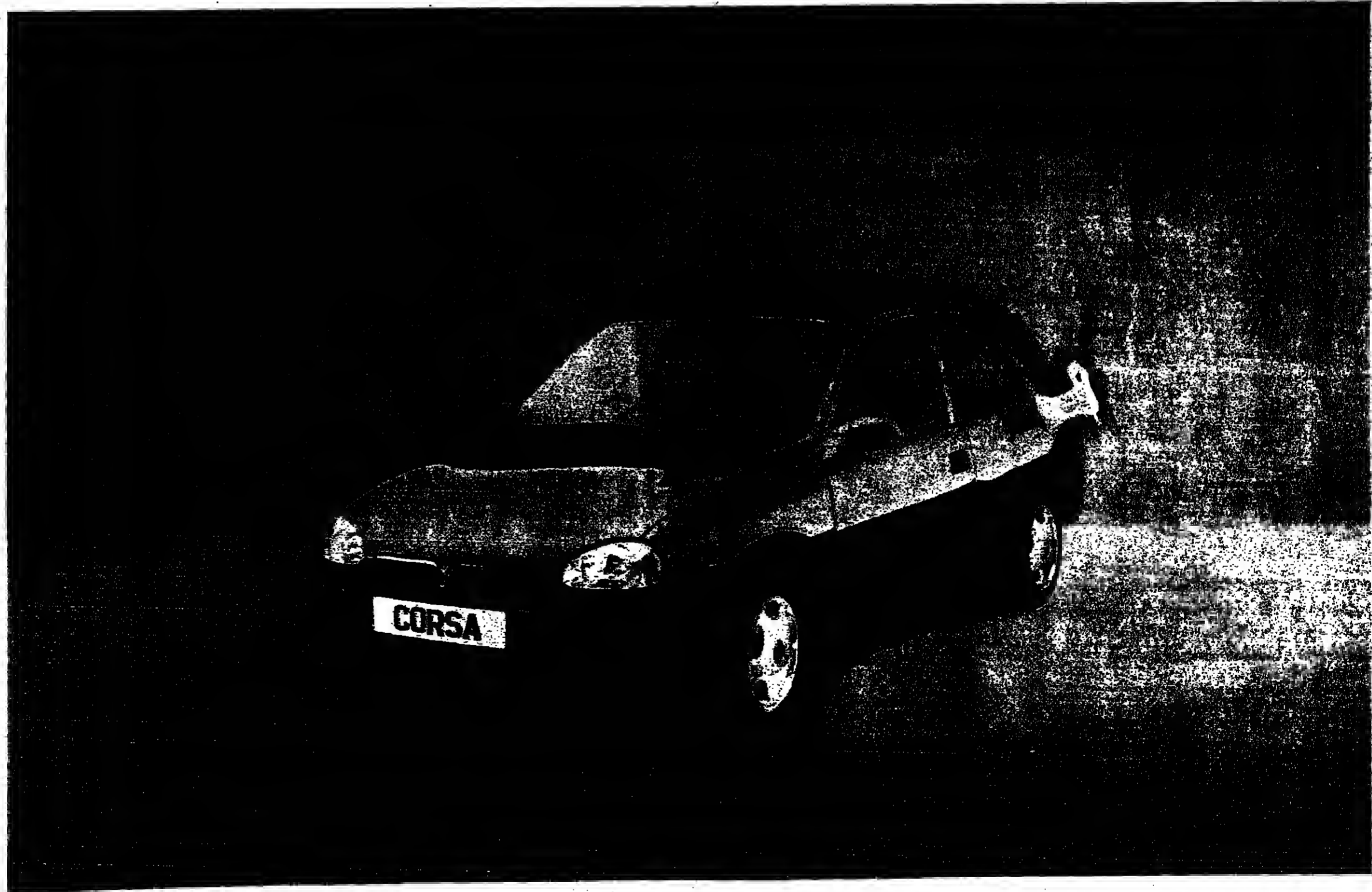
His parents, Haydn and Pam Bendall from Lydney, Gloucestershire, said that his condition had since improved greatly. "It was wonderful to see him finally starting to react to things. He grabbed hold of it well and I reckon he could have lifted it up on his own," Mrs Bendall said.

Her son's neck was broken in the accident last October. He spent three weeks at Frenchay Hospital in Bristol before being transferred to Gloucester Royal Hospital. Although he opened his eyes a week later, he had been motionless and unresponsive since, and doctors said that he could take years to recover.

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Dewar eyes a full house

Labour's Scottish leader in waiting
is on a winning streak — with
bingo-goers, writes Jason Allardye

THE Secretary of State for Scotland looks as if he has just committed a most terrible deed. Donald Dewar is ashen-faced and his big hands are covered in a blood-red liquid — but he has something more serious than murder in mind.

Armed with a felt pen which is running all over the place, the man most likely to emerge as leader of Scotland's first parliament in 300 years is lost in a game of bingo in one of Glasgow's most deprived communities. Bingo is the new religion in Possilpark, where neon-lit, licensed hangars attract a following bigger than any local churches can hope for.

Mr Dewar is just one number short of a full house and the prospect of winning £100. Of course, the Scottish Labour leader would be far too much of a gentleman to take the money in a community blighted by drugs, high unemployment and poverty. He is here to demonstrate to ordinary Scots that his "conversation with Scotland", as the Labour Party has dubbed his

presidential-style 2,000-mile campaign around the country, is as relevant to a working-class audience as it is to the middle-income voters who propelled the party to power in 1997.

Donald Dewar is a rather awkward premier-in-waiting. He does not normally go in for media stunts like yesterday's, which also involved him calling the bingo numbers, with a little help from Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary. Until a few months ago, he even resisted the efforts of Labour imagemakers to convince him that his 20-year-old overcoat had to go, that his heavy, horn-rimmed glasses should be replaced and that crisp shirts and snappy ties must become de rigueur.

As Scottish Secretary of State after the general election, he was even uneasy about the notion of being driven around by someone else in a government Rover — he only grudgingly accepted that it was part of the job.

Yesterday, on "Donald Dewar's Holyrood Express", Labour's Scottish battlebus, he still wasn't wearing a belt, and over lunch he insisted on picking at a plate of chips with his fingers. He may be two weeks away from governing Scotland but Donald Dewar is still Donald Dewar. While such characteristics make this man of the stilted soundbite appear rather odd, they also make him enormously popular, and



Donald Dewar, Mo Mowlam and local candidate Patricia Ferguson in Possil

have led him to be dubbed father of the Scottish nation. At the bingo in Possil, a better focus group than most of those which preoccupy the Labour Party, it was Mr Dewar's peculiar and sombre calling — "Three-seven, thirty seven: very sinister" — which drew the biggest cheers from the audience of 400 people. As he prepares for power, Mr Dewar, who is variously dubbed "The

Gannet" on account of his voracious appetite and "The Stork" on account of his gangly appearance, is clearly beginning to enjoy a campaign that is going his way.

Donald Dewar allows himself a smile. "I really do think it's coming our way," he says, "and it's a happy campaign for that reason."

Letters, page 25

English exiles who are backing SNP

By Gillian Harris, Scotland Correspondent

THIRTEEN years after she moved from the East End of London to the North East of Scotland, Dot Jessiman met a politician at a party who asked her if she had ever considered joining the SNP.

When she pointed out that she was English, he laughed and replied: "What's that got to do with anything?"

Mrs Jessiman says it was that conversation with the late Allan Macartney, the Scottish National Party's former deputy leader, which convinced her to sign up. She now heads New Scots for Independence, a group whose 500 members are not Scottish but back SNP policies, including independence. The overwhelming majority are English but some are from France, Ghana, Germany, India and Belgium.

The devotion of the growing band of Englishmen and women to the SNP has caused surprise in some quarters. After all they are effectively voting to turn a part of the United Kingdom into a foreign country. But the activists accept that if Scotland votes for independence, they will be foreigners in the place they call home. "That doesn't bother me at all," said David Ashby, 46, a recent SNP recruit from Swindon in Wiltshire. "I cross a border when I go to France on holiday. Why should it bother me to cross a border back into England?"

Mr Ashby and his wife Carol moved to Cumbernauld 16 years ago. They joined the party this month after meeting their SNP candidate, Andrew Wilson, who introduced them to Alex Salmond, SNP leader. "We asked ourselves what party would really represent the country and came to the conclusion it was the SNP," Mr Ashby, who works in an electrical engineering firm, said.

"We are not placard-waving activists but it is frightening how ignorant people in England are about what is going on in Scotland. People down south do not seem to realise that Scotland is already a separate country and for people in England to turn around and say Scotland needs England, when it does not, is just ridiculous." They insist that they have never experienced anti-English racism. "The only racism was in London when I tried to pay for something with a Scottish pound note and got some snide remark about Jocks," Mr Ashby said.

He wants to become involved in the fight for seats in the Holyrood parliament. "It is all very well sitting around moaning and groaning but this is a chance to change things and I think we have a duty to do what we can."

Mrs Jessiman, 63, who has lived with her husband in Aberdeenshire since 1975, believes that a record number of English people in Scotland will vote SNP on May 6. "Once they come here they can see the injustice of being dictated to from Westminster, they remember experiments carried out in Scotland like the poll tax and they want to change all that," she said. Mrs Jessiman, who is standing as an SNP list candidate in North East Scotland, was a Labour supporter before she moved to Scotland. A former GLC housing officer, she left her family in Brent to live in a remote croft four miles from the nearest village. "The change could not have been greater," she said.

‘Why should it bother me to cross a border into England?’

QUOTE of the day

Donald Dewar, the Scottish Labour leader, out almost winning a game of bingo in Glasgow.

"I was one number short of a full house."

today's AGENDA

Gordon Brown will speak in Glasgow. The Tories will focus on tourism, while the SNP will discuss justice. Jim Wallace of the Lib Dems visits a healthy eating initiative for young mothers in Pitlochry, Edinburgh.



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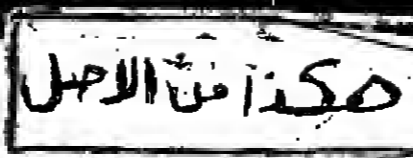
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'Gang tortured mentally ill girl to death'

Three teenage girls and two young men are accused of murder, reports Paul Wilkinson

A GANG of three teenage girls and two young men were said yesterday to have systematically tortured a "generous and vulnerable" teenager to death over six days.

At Easter last year Angela Pearce, 18, a schizophrenic, was lured to a flat to be robbed but the gang decided to keep her captive and subjected her to horrendous assaults. Eventually they agreed that she should not live to tell the tale. Leeds Crown Court was told.

She was suffocated with a belt and plastic bag and dumped in a cupboard. Her body was later buried in a shallow grave in a disused cemetery.

Malcolm Swift, QC, for the prosecution, said that at one stage her attackers, three girls aged 16, 17, and 19, and two men aged 17 and 21, turned up a hi-fi to drown her cries of pain while they laughed and joked.

They had beaten her with a steam iron and snooker cues. Her hair was burnt off and cig-

arettes were stubbed out on her body. Claire Laiff, now 20, her sister Meina, 18, Mark Francom, 22, Christopher Bevis, 18, and a 17-year-old girl identified only as "H" for legal reasons, deny murder between April 7 and 15 last year. The five, from Leeds, also deny false imprisonment and grievous bodily harm with intent. Claire Laiff and "H" also deny robbery.

Mr Swift said that the gang lured Miss Pearce, who wore a pendant and rings and had £95 in her purse, to a tower block. "The females knew Angela was not normal and decided to take her to their flat to get her drunk and to abuse her. Each of the defendants played a part and their ferocity was such that each formed the view that Angela couldn't be allowed and wouldn't be allowed to leave alive," he said.

First her rings were forcibly removed. "H" then got an electric iron and struck her in the face with considerable force," Mr Swift said. She was kicked and punched and one witness, who came and went to the house over the following days, described her eyes as swollen to the size of tennis balls. There was blood everywhere. On Good Friday she plead-

ed for water but "H" instead gave her disinfectant. Mr Swift said: "Then 'H' picked up a snooker cue and swung it hard at Angela's head. Meina and 'H' stubbed out cigarettes on her face to the amusement of Claire and others."

On Easter Saturday the violence continued. "H" amused herself by spraying hairspray over Angela's hair and setting fire to the spray in the nature of a flamethrower. Everyone laughed, so 'H' did it again," Mr Swift said. "Francome pulled Angela to her feet to punch her full in the face and she fell to the floor. He decided to urinate over her."

On Easter Sunday she was locked in the kitchen cupboard, where she was regularly beaten. The next day Meina cut off her hair and the following day 'H' put a plastic bag over her head and a belt round her neck and suffocated her.

On April 16 the two males buried the body in the old Mabgate Cemetery in Leeds. The trial continues.



Helen Goleworthy with a jungle nymph from Indonesia at the opening yesterday of London Zoo's new building

Zoo's web captures animal magic

By Nick Nuttall
ENVIRONMENT
CORRESPONDENT

LOCUSTS crawl over a battered jeep while near by butterflies fly free. Not far away, golden lion tamarin monkeys, tarantulas and anteaters roam in a replica rainforest to the sound of birds and rain. Elsewhere, upside-down jelly fish gently move through seawater.

This is the Web of Life, a series of 65 live-animal exhibits and London Zoo's first new building since the children's zoo opened four years ago. It has been designed to astonish the visitor with the complexity of nature and its myriad habitats.

Dr Jo Gippes, director of London Zoo, said yesterday at the launch: "All its animals have been chosen to highlight the variety of living organisms on Earth and the range of ecosystems they inhabit." The £4 million project is housed in a building inspired by antheaps. Termites sink boreholes to cool homes and the Web of Life centre has geothermal cooling from a borehole. Tall chimneys simulate those used by termites for ventilation.

Leading article, page 25



Angela Pearce said to have been lured to flat by gang

Old pews promote 'passive' worship

CHURCH pews can be "uncomfortable, rigid and unwelcoming" and remind worshippers of feudal society, according to a Church of Scotland report published today (Ruth Gledhill writes).

The pews can contribute to "passive" worship and, in some cases, should be removed entirely, the report says. "Many buildings were designed to conform to a pattern of church life and worship from which we have now largely moved on," it claims.

The report, by the church's committee on artistic matters, says that although pews can be historically and aesthetically

appropriate, they are often no longer ideal for a "living church". While there might be a "cosiness" about sitting in a well-populated pew, in an empty church they can make people sit apart.

The report says that while pews should be removed from some churches, in others they are still appropriate.

The Rev Graham Leitch, minister of Barclay Church, Edinburgh, which has recently removed half of its pews as part of a £350,000 renovation, said: "It increases the flexibility of the space and has been enormously successful already. We have had a 95 per cent positive response."



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TINY COMPUTERS

Britain warns of Serb coup in Montenegro

By MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

BRITAIN yesterday gave a warning that President Milosevic was about to stage a coup in Montenegro, as confrontations between the Yugoslav Army and the Montenegrin police raised fears of an imminent showdown.

George Robertson, Defence Secretary, said Britain remained "vigilant and gravely concerned" about Mr Milosevic's intentions towards Montenegro. "We believe he may be about to undermine the position of Milo Djukanovic, the democratically elected President of that country."

After the killing of six Al-

banians inside Montenegro by Yugoslav troops — which Belgrade disputes — the Montenegrin Government demanded the punishment of those responsible. It also threatened to dismantle a military checkpoint blocking the border with Croatia after a Yugoslav Army incursion into the demilitarised Prevlaka peninsula on the Adriatic on Tuesday.

"The block will not last long because we will clear it," Dragisa Burzan, the deputy Prime Minister, said. He gave a warning that the army was trying to become a "parallel authority." "By doing this, they

are increasing the possibility of conflict. I can say that we are close to the line."

The army yesterday blamed the killing of the refugees, including an old woman and a 13-year-old boy, on the Kosovo Liberation Army. But villagers said the Yugoslav Army was moving in to launch another assault on Kosovo.

Tensions rose higher yesterday after President Djukanovic rejected Belgrade's demand to put his loyalist police force under army command. Mr Burzan denounced the killing of the Kosovan refugees as a crime against humanity and called for the perpetrators to be tried for war crimes.

The Pentagon confirmed that the army has begun to drive Albanian refugees who escaped from Kosovo out of villages in Montenegro.

Nato yesterday repeated its warning that it was determined to stop any extension of the conflict to other countries and Mr Milosevic of trying to destabilise the Balkans. "There is a monstrous evil in our continent," he said before leaving for Washington. "The events in Kosovo have brought to light some of the worst, most depraved aspects of humanity, genocide, ethnic cleansing, rape and the virtual decapitation of Kosovo Albanian society."

Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, said on a satellite link from Skopje, Macedonia, that he believed that a ground war would be inevitable. Britain has repeatedly ruled out the use of ground troops, but said yesterday that more troops were being sent to Macedonia to be deployed as part of a peacekeeping force in Kosovo. Mr Robertson, underlining his careful choice of words, said only that the position on a "full-scale opposed invasion" remained as before.

The restless and resentful ally

MONTENEGRO was the smallest and poorest of the republics that made up the former Yugoslavia, and the only one to stay with Serbia when the others broke away in 1992 (Michael Binyon writes).

It has become increasingly restless at Belgrade's political and economic domination and resentful of the isolation caused by the sanctions on Yugoslavia. President Djukanovic came to power on an anti-Milosevic platform and a promise to conduct a more independent foreign and economic policy. Montenegro has separate trade agreements with Italy and Albania. In 1993 it dissociated itself, in effect, from the Serbian Orthodox Church.

A sixth the size of Serbia and with a population of 640,000, this land of spectacular mountains and lush valleys is ethnically divided between Serbs, Montenegrins and Albanians. Relations between them are tense. In 1941 Italian troops occupied parts of Montenegro, but by



late 1944 the Partisans, with British arms and equipment, controlled most of it. The Montenegrins were among the toughest of Tito's Partisans.

Since Nato's action began, Montenegro has taken in at least 70,000 Kosovan refugees, more per head of population than any of the surrounding countries. The Yugoslav 32nd Army has increasingly become Belgrade's instrument to enforce its will on the territory.



Three Apaches among a group of combat helicopters touching down in southern Italy en route to Albania yesterday.

FROM SAM KILEY IN KRUME, NORTHERN ALBANIA

First Apaches fly in to Albania

THE first American Apache "tank killer" helicopters arrived in Albania yesterday for a high-risk deployment in Kosovo that will test the resolve of Nato's leaders and the American public over the level of casualties they consider acceptable in the Balkans.

Intelligence sources have told *The Times* that the Apaches, armed with Hellfire missiles and heavy cannon, will be far more vulnerable to shoulder-launched missiles and anti-aircraft artillery than the high-flying jets that have led the air war so far.

"There are definitely going

to be casualties. Pilots are going to get shot down in Kosovo," said one Western intelligence agent who has worked closely with the Kosovo Liberation Army.

Several intelligence agencies have reported to Nato that the ability of Slobodan Milosevic's air defences against jets to function properly has been badly eroded by airstrikes. But the missiles themselves remain intact.

This will force the Apaches to fly low and fast through treacherous mountains and unpredictable weather on sorties against Serb units.

Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, said in Albania on Monday: God forbid that pilots should be shot down, but in these conditions one has to be prepared to accept that some probably will be."

From the Serb perspective,

however, the Apaches that arrived yesterday, the first of 48, are a major threat to infantry and armoured units which have taken to travelling by tractor and trailer, posing as refugees. Since the accidental bombing of a refugee column last week, Nato pilots have been reluctant to risk hitting more civilians. But the Apaches, which are equipped with night vision and other sophisticated features are less likely to be fooled by Serb camouflage.

The helicopters, which will be based a few minutes from the border, will also be able to react more quickly to KLA and Nato special forces calls for air strikes.

Famed troops to stand guard

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

SEVEN hundred paratroops from the famed US 82nd Airborne Division have arrived in Albania. Their task is to guard Apache anti-tank helicopters, the first of which finally arrived in Tirana last night. 17 days after Nato gave the go-ahead for their deployment.

The arrival of the paratroop battalion from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, was a surprise that emphasised the makeshift quality of the Nato buildup. They were chosen because help was needed in a hur-

ry and the 82nd Airborne is a rapid-response unit.

The Apaches and their guards are expected to be based close to the Kosovo border at a military airfield near Lezha. The paratroops could quickly find themselves in a fight if Serb forces cross the border to attack. If so, the Serbs will be up against a unit with a distinguished history that began in the First World War and continued through the D-Day landings.

Repeated delays in moving the Apaches from Germany to Albania have been blamed on rain, mud and overcrowding

at Tirana airport. They were said to have infuriated General Wesley Clark, Nato's senior military commander, and others in the high command. Even now, it could be several days before the Apaches are ready to attack Serb tanks.

Captain Mark Arden, an Apache pilot who briefed reporters in Tirana, said that the helicopters would acquire themselves well, despite the threat of ground fire.

"The Serbs have been using their armour to great effect on women and children in Kosovo," he said. "The tide is about to turn."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Refugee camp 'hit by Nato'

Majino Nasefje: Four people were killed and 20 injured in a Serb refugee camp during Nato air raids, according to local police and witnesses. At least two devices were reported to have hit the camp, near Dakovica in Kosovo, which housed more than 200 Serb refugees who fled Croatia in 1995. The camp, formerly an agricultural centre, was hit at about 3am. A witness said: "Most of the people were sleeping. Everything happened in several seconds, nobody had time to escape." (AFP)

£13m for KLA

A first gift of more than £13 million has been promised to the Kosovo Liberation Army by Bujar Bukoshi, who controls the finances of the moderate Ibrahim Rugova's Kosovo Democratic League.

UN pessimism

Bangkok: Some Kosovan refugees may never return home, Brunson McKinley, head of the UN's International Organisation for Migration, said. Mr McKinley, in Thailand for a conference, likened their plight to that of the Kurds. (Reuters)

Navy build-up

Sevastopol: A missile cruiser led 30 Russian warships from this Ukrainian port for a ten-day exercise. Admiral Viktor Kravchenko, of the Russian Navy, said the exercises were not related to the Kosovo war. (AP)

Jets kill guard

Miami: Two F18 fighter jets from the aircraft carrier USS John F. Kennedy, on a Kosovo training mission off Puerto Rico, missed their target, killing a civilian guard and wounding four others who were directing the exercise.

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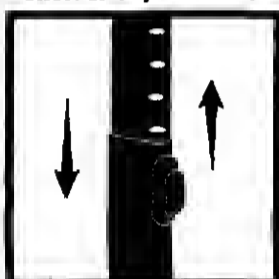
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TV soaps fall victim to 'flying circus'

FROM TOM WALKER IN BELGRADE

IT WAS an odd wake, the media gathering on the freshly mown grass as Goran Matic, frontman for the left in Yugoslavia, read the eulogy on the still-smoking and blackened skeleton behind him.

Reaching for descriptions to express this latest Nato outrage, he opted for a crowd pleaser: how else could you explain what was going on other than *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, he said.

Mr Matic, Minister without Portfolio, had just become minister without building. The hulk lying in the park beside the Sava and Danube rivers was none other than the Socialist Party headquarters of President Milosevic, struck by a Nato Tomahawk yesterday morning.

That was the eighth floor, above, on Floor 19, another missile had crashed into the offices of TV Pink and, further inwards the heavens on Floor 23, yet another had scored a direct hit on Mr Milosevic's daughter's private radio and television station, Kosava.

If it was the dead parrot sketch to which the youthful Mr Matic referred, then this was definitely an ex-building. No longer would there be any mysterious Socialist cabals, such as those that brought Mr Milosevic to power; the former communist headquarters of Tito was hated by many, but not would there be any more episodes of *The Simpsons* or the Brazilian soap opera *Esmeralda*, for which it was loved.

Even when hitting Mr Milo-

sevic's party machine so directly, Nato had scored another own goal. "This building brought the people American movies and Western programmes," protested Mr Matic, who claimed four broadcasters were based in the tower. "It seems the freedom of the media is more dangerous to Nato than the military."

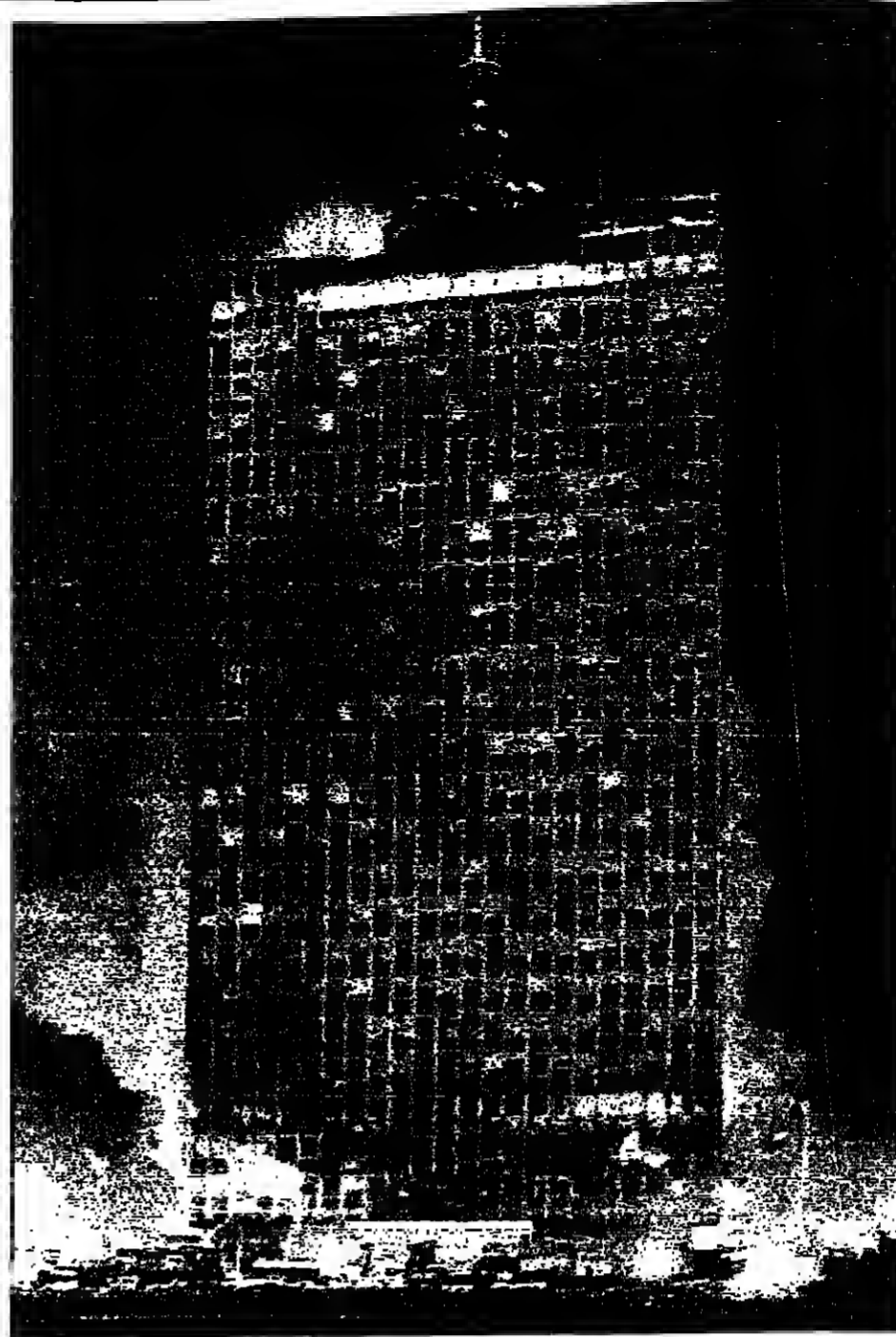
As usual after Nato's more spectacular strikes, there were confusing accounts of the damage. As the first pictures of the flames were broadcast on the few channels left, there was talk of 30 people having been trapped inside. Later Mr Matic made no mention of casualties, and it seemed the tower had probably been empty - this again leading to speculation that Nato gives advance warning of targets where "collateral damage" could be high.

Mr Milosevic was elected head of the then Serbian Communist Party at the tower in 1986, and his wife, Mira Markovic, has always been associated with TV Pink. Marija, their daughter, recently expanded Kosava's youth radio business into television. On other floors were many of the "export-import" businesses on which cronies of the regime grew fat.

Robert Nemecek, Pink's programme director, promised the station would return. Of *Esmeralda*, watched by 40 per cent of the nation, he said: "They never saw the final episode because of the bombs."

In the park, gardeners began clearing away rubble and pieces of missile casing - the debris of Nato's flying circus.

BALKANS WAR



Direct hit: the building containing Slobodan Milosevic's party headquarters

It's time Nato gave its rhetoric a reality check

INTERNATIONAL summits are invariably a time for evasion, euphemism and fudge. But Nato leaders, meeting in Washington this weekend for the alliance's 50th anniversary, owe their citizens candour. There is a worrying gap between rhetoric and reality.

To listen to the daily briefings, you would think that everything is going according to plan, but a little bad weather. But that is obviously nonsense. The Nato military operation is fully justified, but it was started in a muddled and confused way. Leaders underestimated the Serbian determination to expel the Kosovo Albanians in the most horrible imaginable way and overestimated the impact of bombing on President Milosevic.

The air campaign has, admittedly, seriously damaged the military capability of Serbia. But it has failed to prevent "ethnic cleansing". Indeed, the plight of the refugees on the borders of Kos-

ovo is now desperate. Means and ends are out of kilter.

That does not mean that the operation is wrong. Rather, Nato leaders should admit publicly what they are conceding in private, that a change of gear is now needed. The plan is clear: intensify air attacks (as is now happening) and prepare for the deployment of ground troops to permit the safe return of refugees.

While Nato leaders agree that "the difficulties of a land-force invasion of Kosovo against an undegraded Serb military machine are formidable", this leaves open the option of deploying troops when such "degradation" has occurred, when the risk of heavy casualties has been reduced. When this might happen has been left deliberately

vague, in part because of public opposition now. However, the issue has to be faced openly if the public is to be persuaded.

That needs to be coupled with a realistic statement of war aims. Denouncing President Milosevic as another Hitler achieves nothing except to solidify his support. Nato is not likely to agree a negotiated deal with him, and his regime will probably remain in power for some time, just as Saddam Hussein's has. It is no part of Nato war aims to oust him or to invade Serbia. So a Nato-run Kosovo will have to co-exist with an unfriendly, if not actively hostile, Serbia.

Kosovo has shown that Europe is still militarily dependent on the United States. Whatever happens within Kosovo itself, Europe needs even more urgently than before to improve its own capabilities. Frankness about both ends and means would be the best outcome in Washington.



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BALKANS WAR: ALLIES' LOYALTY

Where Nato's members stand

Government stance: Unlike Gulf War, from which Belgium distanced itself, the campaign is winning strong backing from centre-left coalition. More than 1,000 service personnel deployed, along with four F16 fighters. Tradition of support for humanitarian causes means much is made of refugees arriving since Sunday.

Public opinion: About 70 per cent favour air offensive; only 40 per cent back ground invasion.

Implications: No significant political parties are opposing the operation, but it is bound to become a factor in general elections on June 13.

Government stance: Behind Nato and would back sending ground troops, but prefers continuing bombing and favours using Apache helicopters. Has dozen CF18 jet fighters at Aviano with another six on way. About 650 military personnel in campaign.

Public opinion: Government support — about 71 per cent now back airstrikes — has risen steadily. Only 47 per cent favour sending ground troops. About 250,000 Serb-Canadians, plus as many of Slavic origin, are vociferously opposed.

Implications: May lose credentials as leading world peacemaker and internationally impartial.

Government stance: President Havel backs the airstrikes. Milos Zeman, the Prime Minister, praising the friendship between Czechs and Serbs, is sceptical, as is the Speaker, Vaclav Klaus.

Public opinion: Against military involvement in Kosovo — only about a third of Czechs support Nato action unambiguously.

Implications: Risk of an embarrassing exposure of the involvement of the Czech arms industry. Czech-manufactured anti-aircraft radar systems are apparently being used by the Yugoslavs. The Kosovo Liberation Army has also been buying from the Czechs.

Government stance: The Social Democrat-led Government has staunchly backed the air offensive, committing eight F16 fighters. Right-wing MPs unhappy that request to send submarine to Adriatic yet to be met.

Public opinion: Polls and letters to newspapers indicate solid support. In one poll, 65 per cent in favour of airstrikes and 46 per cent thought ground troops should be deployed.

Implications: Professional soldiers and right-wing parties think a government plan to cut defence spending by 2002 is now likely to be distinctly less stringent than had been proposed.

Government stance: Paris firmly behind Nato on airstrikes, with fighter jets playing an important role. Hubert Védrine, Foreign Minister, wants no change to present Kosovo strategy, but extreme right and the Communists are united against action.

Public opinion: Widespread support for ground intervention (64 per cent) amid growing doubts about effectiveness of airstrikes, still backed by 70 per cent.

Implications: Popularity of President Chirac and Lionel Jospin, Prime Minister, boosted, but fears of repercussions for Europe, and of provoking Russia.

Government stance: Germany committed to airstrikes, its first involvement in active combat since 1945. Fourteen Tornados in action, 3,000 troops are in Macedonia and a German frigate is in Adriatic. Ground troops will be used only to implement a peace deal.

Public opinion: Airstrikes supported by 64 per cent, with 30 per cent against. East Germans are most critical. Opinion still against, but shifting towards, Nato ground troop action — 33 per cent in favour, 55 against.

Implications: Medium-term risk that Green Party, seriously divided over airstrikes, will defect from Government, bringing it down.

Government stance: Socialist Government of Costas Simitis has been adept at walking tight-rope. Says morally obliged to help Nato but has ruled out contributing ground forces.

Public opinion: Opinion polls vary but all put anti-Nato bombardment figure at 92 to 97 per cent. Fuelled by Orthodox solidarity with Serbs and crafted Yugoslav TV images of burning cities and dismembered bodies. Anti-Americanism high.

Implications: Gloomy leaders fear a greater Albania and that northeast Turkish-speaking Muslim minority will seek autonomy.

Government stance: A fervent Atlanticist, it yesterday called for an intensification of airstrikes. Jozias van Aartsen, Foreign Minister, said there were still many options open to Nato, but use of ground troops was not realistic.

Public opinion: About 78 per cent back Nato air raids and 68 per cent would support using ground troops, according to a recent poll.

Implications: MPs are concerned that the costly air campaign will overstretch an already strained defence budget, and that the country will not be able to accommodate thousands of Kosovo refugees.

Government stance: A nervous Viktor Orban, Prime Minister, has cross-party support for airstrikes but with Nato bombs falling near border, pressure is growing to stay clear of action. No plans to contribute to military operations but air space available.

Public opinion: Decisively in favour of war — 60 per cent for, 31 against.

Implications: Long term, economy will suffer, investors avoiding a front-line state. Danube blockade and collapse of Yugoslav exports taking toll. Danger that Serbs turn on 300,000 Hungarian minority in Vojvodina region.

MAJORITY opinion in most of the countries belonging to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (Nato) is behind the continuing airstrikes against Yugoslavia as leaders of the alliance gather in Washington to mark its fiftieth anniversary.

Support for sending in ground troops, however, lags behind. Both the British and French governments can count on a strong public endorsement of their hawkish stances.

In the US, acceptance of the need for ground forces is growing, but the leaders of nations in central and southern Europe face a harder task when it comes to persuading their citizens of the merits of taking such military action.

Government stance: Iceland's mainly conservative coalition Government fully endorses Nato's action. Iceland has no army. Political parties are preoccupied with imminent election; reaction to government line has been muted.

Public opinion: Before break-up of the Soviet Union and of the Warsaw Pact, Nato membership was widely seen as strategically necessary. Today many feel uneasy about supporting military action for the first time.

Implications: There may be calls for a rethink of Iceland's Nato membership, which used to be seen as a defensive coalition, useful to keep the Russians at bay.

Government stance: Italy has played a pivotal role in the conflict, providing 11 air bases for Nato attacks. Massimo D'Alema's centre-left coalition includes an anti-war Communist faction; he has managed to combine loyalty to Nato with promises of a "swift end" to the bombing.

Public opinion: predominantly and increasingly anti-war; ranges from total opposition on far left to concerns at proximity to conflict.

Implications: Fears that Italy will have to take in more refugees and that south's shaky economy will be hit. Fears of more instability among Balkan neighbours.

Government stance: This tiny Nato state has gone along behind the campaign without great enthusiasm from its Government, led by Jean-Claude Juncker, the centrist Prime Minister.

Public opinion: About 60 per cent of the public support the goals of the air offensive but there is little backing for a ground invasion.

Implications: The possibility of a prolonged war is worrying this key EU financial centre and leading federalist state, which is vulnerable to big movements in the European economy. A long conflict is likely to further erode the euro's value.

Government stance: All parliamentary parties agree with the centrist minority Government's support for Nato action; Milosevic is regarded as an evil great enough to justify use of military force. Unhappy over information about bombed refugee convoy.

Public opinion: Kosovo ground action backed by 43 per cent, with 36 against, but military capability stretched by United Nations duties.

Implications: Nato has widespread support, but emphasis may be even more on UN solutions should the military campaign be unsuccessful.

Government stance: The Polish Government is the most enthusiastic of the new Nato members from Central Europe about the alliance's action in the Balkans. It has sent 120 soldiers to Macedonia. There is no serious criticism from the ex-Communists. The Government would probably be ready to contribute to a ground force contingent.

Public opinion: Still backs the airstrikes though it dipped after Nato hit a refugee column.

Implications: In the long term, significant participation by Polish ground troops would have the effect of accelerating the modernisation of the Army.

Government stance: Portugal backs Nato's action and has put fighter planes at its disposal; unwilling to take part in ground offensive. Battalion will give humanitarian aid to refugees in Albania.

Public opinion: Two-thirds of those asked in a poll opposed a ground assault. Observers accuse Government of capitulating to US aims and note lack of concern in international community over the bloodshed in East Timor, a former Portuguese colony.

Implications: The conflict is far away, and is seen as having no direct impact on Portugal other than refugees possibly arriving.

Government stance: Under José María Aznar, Prime Minister, remains steadfast in backing for campaign. Leading opposition group, the Socialist Party, also expressing support, mainly because Javier Solana, Nato's Secretary-General, comes from its ranks.

Public opinion: Greater division, with 55 per cent backing Spanish involvement and 39 per cent against. Similar number say they would back a ground war.

Implications: Spain has no strategic interest of its own in the Balkans, but is increasingly keen on a strong Nato, which would protect it against any threat from North African countries.

Government stance: Turkey, mindful of the Kurds, may have been chary of encouraging interference in ethnic problems, but more than rallied round when it saw the humanitarian disaster. Committed F16s and opened camps for many refugees. Will consider sending ground troops.

Public opinion: Kosovo's pain is deeply felt. Most of the victims are Muslim; some are ethnic Turks with relations in Turkey.

Implications: Greatest danger seen in a Nato climbdown. Turkey and Greece have long been sabre-rattling; no one takes the threat of their fighting entirely seriously.

Government stance: Insists that to end war refugees must return, full security be enforced and monitored by international force, and Yugoslav Army and police units be withdrawn, giving access to aid agencies. Referendum to decide future. Sees little chance of Kosovo staying in Serbia.

Public opinion: Strongly supportive of action, with 2:1 majority backing airstrikes. Growing calls for use of ground troops, but significant minority inside and outside Parliament oppose war.

Implications: British forces may stay in Balkans for years; cost will bring calls for reverse of defence cuts, limiting other spending.

Government stance: Washington is demanding withdrawal of Serb forces from Kosovo, return of refugees and postwar autonomy for the province. Also planning for postwar rebuilding.

Public opinion: Polls show slightly more than 50 per cent of Americans now favour use of ground troops. Majority support the air campaign but are apprehensive about outcome.

Implications: Debate will be revived between isolationists, who question America's Nato membership, and internationalists, who support its role as world policeman.

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and Nuclear theft 'badly harmed US'

Ben Macintyre reports on a damning CIA assessment of Chinese spying

AMERICAN security was seriously damaged by the Chinese theft of designs for the most sophisticated nuclear warhead in the US armoury, according to a damning CIA report.

The report, which was widely leaked before its expected release yesterday, comes after a series of allegations that Chinese spies penetrated US nuclear weapons laboratories in the 1980s. It contradicts White House assertions that evidence of Chinese atomic espionage is inconclusive so far.

China has repeatedly denied the allegations of spying, but the CIA review team concluded that Chinese agents

stole secret design data for the W88 warhead from the Los Alamos nuclear laboratory.

The W88 is an advanced miniaturised nuclear warhead launched from submarines and the report said that the theft from Los Alamos enabled China to develop its own version of the weapon, which allows multiple warheads to be attached to a single intercontinental ballistic missile.

In 1995, US intelligence first noted the sudden strides being made in China's warhead programme: investigations indi-

cated that China had leaptfrogged ahead in its weapons development using stolen US nuclear designs. The CIA report also investigated the implications of China's development of a missile with several warheads capable of striking multiple targets.

On his trip to America this month, Zhu Rongji, the Chinese Prime Minister, said Chinese scientists had developed the country's nuclear weapons programme without the help of stolen US information. Congress and the Adminis-

tration have launched a series of investigations into the espionage claims, focusing on why Wen Ho Lee, a Taiwan-born scientist removed from his post at the Los Alamos laboratory last month, was allowed to continue working at the laboratory long after he was suspected of providing China with information on the W88.

Mr Lee, who has not been charged, was made responsible for updating nuclear weapons software at the laboratory in the spring of 1997, several months after the FBI had be-

gun the investigation in which he became the prime suspect. Senate and House committees are also investigating whether the Administration was slow to respond. The theft was detected in 1995 and reported a year later to officials, including Sandy Berger, now National Security Adviser, but laboratory security was not improved until last year.

The White House has sought to downplay the allegations of Chinese espionage and last month President Clinton said that "the investigation

has not yet determined for sure" that it occurred.

In evidence given at a hearing on Chinese espionage last week, Notra Trulock, an Energy Department intelligence adviser, said that initially he had been prevented from telling Congress about his concerns: officials feared US-China relations might be damaged.

The CIA damage assessment concluded that, as well as stealing secret material, China had got information from other sources, such as academic communications between Chinese and US scientists in which information was passed inadvertently to Beijing.

WORLD SUMMARY

King's visit heals rift with Syria

Jerusalem: An end to years of strained relations between Syria and its pro-Western neighbour, Jordan, was signalled when the new Jordanian ruler, King Abdullah II, received a warm welcome from President Assad during his first state visit to Damascus (Christopher Walker writes).

The trip follows the funeral of King Hussein two months ago, when the Syrian leader arrived unexpectedly on his first visit to Jordan in five years and spent over an hour in talks with the new King. Yesterday's visit opened the way to a new Jordanian-Syrian axis after years of animosity arising from many causes, including bitter Syrian opposition to Jordan's 1994 peace treaty with Israel.

Sources in Amman said Mr Assad was pleased by the late King's decision to replace his brother, Prince Hassan, as Crown Prince with Abdullah. Syria had accused Prince Hassan of backing the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood group which carried out bombings in the country in the 1980s.

Khmer Rouge trial set

A Khmer Rouge guerrilla commander is to be put on trial for the murder of Mark Slater, a British backpacker from Corby, Northamptonshire, a Frenchman and an Australian, who were snatched from a train in Cambodia in 1994 (David Watts writes). No date for the trial of Nonn Paet has been set and investigations could take up to three months. The three men were bludgeoned to death.

'Meddling' in Games

Australia's representative on the International Olympic Committee, has strongly criticised America for interfering in the movement despite the IOC's house-clearing (David Watts writes). Kevin Gospar said the American decision to deny tax-free status to US corporations' support of the Olympic movement would threaten money that had in the past been used to promote sport in less-developed countries.

Neo-Nazis burn hostel

Bonn: Four people were taken to hospital with smoke poisoning after neo-Nazis set a refugee hostel ablaze at Freiberg in Saxony, eastern Germany (Roger Boyes writes). The attack, on Tuesday, was probably intended to mark the 110th anniversary of Hitler's birthday on Tuesday. To the Austrian city of Graz, a Jewish cemetery was vandalised with swastikas. Some Jewish gravestones were also daubed in Germany.

Timor peace pact

Warring factions in East Timor signed a peace agreement which the Indonesian military vowed to enforce (David Watts writes). Leaders of the militias which have clashed over ties with Indonesia signed the pact at the home of Bishop Carlos Belo, the Nobel Peace Prize winner. The agreement does not specify disarmament. Today Indonesia and Portugal resume talks on the proposed autonomy pact for the territory.

Wild Amazon chase

Jakarta: Indonesian authorities will try to establish whether a tribe of cannibalistic women exists deep in the jungles of the remote province of Irian Jaya. Reports of the so-called Bok tribe have claimed that it consists of 20 big-bodied women who eat human flesh, roam naked in the Mamberano jungles, and kill the men after kidnapping them for mating. A previous official attempt to locate the tribe failed. (AFP)

Lost vote could be final blow for Yeltsin

FROM ANNA BLUNDY IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT YELTSIN suffered what could be a fatal political blow yesterday when Russia's Federation Council, the upper house of parliament, voted once again to reject the resignation of Yuri Skuratov, the Chief Prosecutor and a key player in a continuing sex and corruption scandal.

The surprise decision is in defiance of the wishes of Mr Yeltsin, who failed to get rid of Mr Skuratov in a similar vote last month. *Kommersant-daily* wrote yesterday that, if Mr Yeltsin failed to secure the support of the Federation Council, it would be tantamount to his impeachment. The council fell 29 votes short of the 90 votes needed to accept Mr Skuratov's resignation.

"This is a colossal political loss for the President and it will mean a political crisis whose consequences cannot be guessed at," said Andrei Piontovsky of the Centre for Strategic Studies.

Mr Skuratov, who has been investigating alleged bribe-taking by Kremlin officials, was suspended when charges of abuse of power were brought against him after the showing of video material showing him cavorting with prostitutes, but it is alleged that the prostitutes were provided by people wishing to avoid prosecution.



A policeman in riot gear stands guard near a smouldering barricade in Kingston in the wake of tax protests

Flights hit by rioting in Jamaica

MIAMI: TROOPS patrolled Jamaica's capital, Kingston, yesterday after protesters blocked streets and confronted police over a series of new government taxes to tackle the country's mounting debt and a banking collapse, writes David Adams.

The Foreign Office warned against all non-essential travel there as many businesses remained closed for a second day after rioting on Monday resulted in at least one death. British Airways and American Airlines suspended flights to the island.

Police say they opened fire on the rioters with teargas and warning shots, but deny firing into the crowds. At least six people suffered bullet wounds. The protest was ignited by a hike in petrol prices — up to £1.25 a gallon from 97p — and a 30 per cent rise in vehicle licensing costs.

Space, the final frontier for rich tourists

FROM SUSAN BELL IN PARIS

PACK up your moon boots and head for the stars. According to the European Space Agency (ESA), holidaymakers may be able to take trips into space in the near future, and stay in hotels orbiting the Earth. Even vacations on the moon should be feasible by the middle of the next century.

The announcement that space tourism could soon become a reality

came as the first of two conferences devoted to the subject opened in Bremen, Germany. The four-day conference coincides with the release of an ESA study on the long-term prospects for space travel.

Geraldine Naja, who is in charge of European policy and perspective at the ESA, said she expected sub-orbital trips into space — lasting several hours and in which passengers would be able to experience a few minutes of weight-

lessness — to be available in as little as ten years.

"A space hotel featuring zero gravity amusement parks and swimming pools could be a reality by 2020 and would be ten times more fun than Space Mountain at EuroDisney," she said.

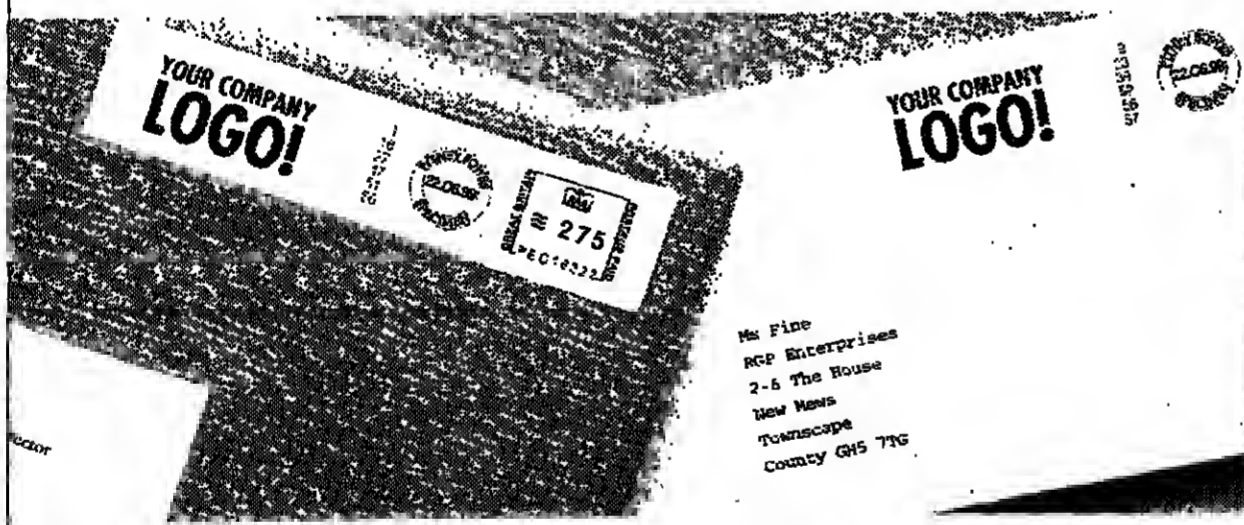
Building the space hotel should pose few problems as the necessary technology already exists. The trouble lies in how to get there. "The rockets we have

at the moment are just too risky and expensive to make tourism viable," she said.

However, the ESA is confident that the necessary breakthroughs which will make space travel sufficiently safe and affordable will not be long in coming. It is difficult to estimate the cost of a trip into space, but sums of £50,000 for a one-hour flight have been mentioned. However, the ESA believes finding customers will not be a problem.

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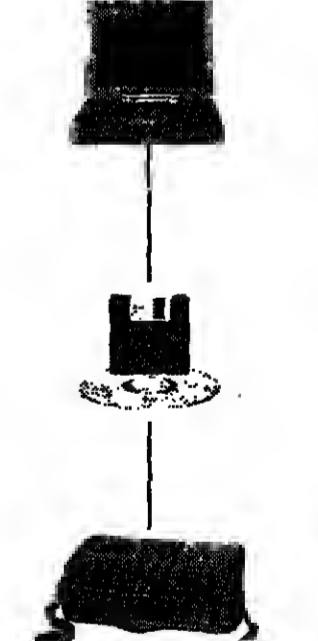
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Dr Thomas Stuttford reports on John Diamond and oral cancer; nappies that are kind to the environment; treatment for depression; the benefits of drinking sheep's milk; and progress in the treatment of leukaemia

Go green, throw a nappy on the compost heap



Babies in disposable nappies stay drier and can be changed quicker, but the used nappies create a major landfill problem. Now there is a biodegradable alternative

ARCHAEOLOGISTS excavating a landfill site in Sussex in 500 years' time will still be able to find traces of granddaughter Alice's misnamed "disposable" nappies. Every discarded nappy takes this long to break down as a result of the plastic in its outer cover. Nine million disposable nappies are used every day in the UK, more than three billion in a year. They are beginning to represent a considerable environmental problem.

The dilemma of nappies did not affect my generation. We had Harrington squares as the outer nappy and muslin as a lining. They were so expensive that there was no question of disposal. They were laundered and, crisp and white, used repeatedly. Disposable nappies are quicker to put on, keep the baby's skin much drier and therefore reduce the incidence of nappy rash and other skin troubles, but they are a landfill menace.

Enviro, an enterprising manufacturer from Luton in Bedfordshire, has set out to market nappies that keep the environmentalist happy but still spare the 98.5 per cent of new parents, who opt for the convenience of disposable nappies, hours of washing. Enviro produces the Weenee disposable nappy, which is compostable. It was awarded a bronze medal at the International Exhibition of Inventions in Geneva and sells readily in Australia and New Zealand, where there are tax incentives to encourage families to use recycled nappies (my children's old Harrington squares) or compostable disposable nappies, such as the Weenee, that contain no plastic.

All listeners of gardening programmes know the value of the compost heap. The latest ingredients to go with the grass clippings, weeds and degradable household rubbish are Weenee nappies.

The manufacturers suggest that dirty plastic-free nappies should be flushed down the lavatory, and that wet ones should go on the compost heap. The nappies can be bought with nappy bags that are also compostable and biodegradable.

● Enviro (UK) Ltd, 37 Frederick Street, Luton, Bedfordshire LU2 7QW; 01582 484899.

Living with cancer

Even though the tens of thousands of busy doctors listed in the *Medical Directory* need to choose their reading with care, the account of facing cancer of the tongue by John Diamond, *The Times* columnist, should still have an assured readership.

Diamond's book *C: Because Cowards Get Cancer Too* should be compulsory reading for doctors, not only because it highlights so many clinical lessons but because he wittily dissects the medical fraternity, their mannerisms and professional idiosyncrasies just as carefully as they dissected the tumour from the back of his tongue.

The book is brilliantly written, will fascinate and, despite the tragic subject, amuse and inspire both lay readers and the medical profession. Diamond has the ability to explain the complex aspects of his cancer in a way that makes it readily understandable.

Diamond developed a swelling in his neck that was attributed to glandular fever, infectious mononucleosis. The "gland" did not disappear but its continuing presence alarmed no one except Diamond. There is still the myth

that glandular fever is a disease that waxes and wanes, despite research in Oxford which showed that there is scant evidence for this.

As weeks went by Diamond's glandular fever was relabelled "persistent glandular fever" and then "chronic glandular fever". It transpired that the lump was not a gland but a branchial cyst — a fairly rare condition, though not one to silence a medical meeting. When the cyst was aspirated, and cells were extracted, the pathologists found malignant cells. The tumour had already spread to the nearby lymphatic glands. Even so, it was many months before the primary site of the cancer, at the root of the tongue, was discovered.

Cancers of the tongue are included in the general term "oral cancer". Diamond's book, and his accounts of his cancer in *The Times*, have made compulsive reading and alerted the public, doctors and dentists to the need to be watchful. In the European Union as a whole, oral cancer is more common than cervical cancer, and any person in Britain is twice as likely to die from it as from a drink-driving accident. There are 900 deaths a year in this

country from various oral cancers and 2,000 new cases are spotted annually.

A recent paper published by the Royal College of Surgeons shows that oral cancer is more common in the 20 to 40 age group than previously; cases occur even in the teenage years, and increasing numbers of women are being diagnosed. In general, however, it remains a disease of the older age groups, and 85 per cent of cases occur in the over-50s. When the cancer does develop in younger people, diagnosis is more likely to be delayed, and research has shown that the chances of a diagnosis being made while the tumour is still curable is, at best, rare under the age of 30.

The earlier an oral cancer is detected, the more likely the patient is to live and the less destructive surgery has to be. When the tongue is the primary site, as in Diamond's case, 26 per cent of tumours are, like his, in the posterior third of the tongue, 47 per cent around the edges, 9 per cent on the underside, 11.5 per cent at the tip and 6.5 per cent on the centre of the tongue. Cancer of

the back of the tongue spreads to the tonsils and the soft palate and thereafter to the lymphatic glands in the neck at the angle of the jaw. Only in about 2 per cent of cases does the cancer travel to distant organs. The tumour is most common in smokers, particularly when associated with alcohol.

Early detection improves the survival rate from 50 to 80 per cent. With this in mind, a system of screening using a mouthwash dye containing toluidine blue, OraScreen, which is selectively taken up by cells that might be malignant, or pre-malignant, is employed. Dr Gerald Feaver, senior dental adviser to Marks & Spencer, with Terry Morrison and Dr Gerry Humphris, of Liverpool University, report in *Primary Dental Care* that screening with OraScreen is an acceptable and effective way of improving detection rates of the tumour. OraScreen has a 94 per cent sensitivity in detecting cancers of the mouth and even picks up lesions that do not look suspicious but which are malignant.

● *C: Because Cowards Get Cancer Too* is published by Random House, £6.99

PEOPLE WHO are clinically depressed suffer from the misconception that their troubles are theirs alone. Speakers at a recent conference on the topic in London, organised by the National Depression Campaign, said a depressive shares strikingly similar symptoms at any one time with — and the campaign quotes a remarkably exact figure — 4,385,689 other Britons.

One woman in four and one man in ten suffers depression at some time or another and requires professional help. The good news is that 80 per cent are helped by treatment as long as they continue to take the medication and their doctor continues to prescribe it for an appropriate length of time — usually six months.

At this conference the National Depression Campaign was dealing with the impact of depression on the patients' friends and family. The general view was that families are sometimes marginalised by medical and social services and are more likely to be seen as causes of the trouble than as agents who may help in the patient's recovery.

The overwhelming view of the lay public is that their relative or friend's depression is the result of money problems, bereavement or illness in the family, work or relationship difficulties. The importance of the underlying physical problems that render a patient vulnerable to these trigger factors is seriously underestimated. However, women, more often than men, realise that an

Keep taking the pills



Depressives: not alone

abnormal biochemical or hormonal balance may be the underlying cause of the patient's depressive state. Nearly 90 per cent of relations would welcome more support when they are looking after their relative, and more information about their troubles.

At its last conference, the Campaign dealt with the problems that depressed patients have at work. A poll showed that 63 per cent of employers

were likely to be prejudiced against employing a person who had a history of depression, even though more than eight out of ten people are aware that the disease is treatable. Not surprisingly, most patients with a psychiatric history conceal it from their employers. However, this deprives employers of the opportunity of modifying work surroundings and reducing the chance of a relapse. Potentially depressed workers are unusually vulnerable to excessive noise, inappropriate lighting, a mismatch of skills and role, and any uncertainty of what is expected of them.

The Health Department's figures showed that only one in two people with depression consults a GP. Of these, half are incorrectly diagnosed at the outset and, of these, only 50 per cent receive adequate medication. Many patients do not help themselves — only half given the correct dose took it for more than 28 days. This means that only seven in 100 are effectively treated.

IMS Health, a medical data-collecting organisation, suggests that the figure of 4,385,689 sufferers from depression may already be wrong. Its research shows that numbers have doubled between 1994 and 1998 from four to nine million, and its studies show that even with correct diagnosis, only 39 per cent continued to take antidepressants for the minimum period of six months. Regrettably the average dose prescribed is usually half that recommended by specialists.

A healthier chance of leukaemia survival

IN 1979, when Margaret Thatcher first moved into 10 Downing Street, Lawrence Faldo became the first person to receive a bone marrow transplant in Britain from an identical twin. Lawrence was 27 and had leukaemia. Twenty years on, unlike Mrs Thatcher's government, he is still going strong and the father of triplets, two boys and a girl, now aged nine.

The three are due to ride in a bikeathon for Leukaemia Research in Battersea Park on Sunday, June 13, when four bicycle rides are starting from the park. The money raised from the pledges will go to the Leukaemia Research Fund of Great Ormond Street Hospital. Last year 2,700 cyclists took part and were sent on their way, through the dripping rain, by Genda Jackson, the minister in charge of London's transport.

The treatment of many types of leukaemia has been one of the success stories of postwar

medicine. When I was a junior hospital doctor, it was not uncommon for small children to be admitted with leukaemia and to die within a matter of days. Now a realistic, but not always attainable goal, is a cure for all cases of acute lymphoblastic leukaemia and acute myelogenous leukaemia. The babies who, 40 years earlier, would have died rapidly now have a good chance of living a normal lifespan.

There is unlikely to be any one cause of leukaemia. The fears that were expressed about living near pylons or power stations have abated, but the latest anxiety is that life near an estuary may be associated with a slightly higher than normal — but statistically significant — susceptibility to this group of diseases. Pollution in the water is cited as a possible reason.

● Leukaemia Research Fund London Bikeathon: 0181-671 5500.

HOMOEOPATHS use dogs' milk to treat, among other conditions, overactive imaginations. But for most Britons milk is derived from either a cow, goat or nursing mother. The concept of sheep's milk for human consumption may not be as unusual as dogs' milk, but we are not culturally conditioned to accept it. Medically speaking, we are making a mistake.

Ewes' milk has at least 25 per cent more protein than that from a cow, and twice as much as that from a goat. It

Milk from the ewe is good for you

also has more lactose, and is creamier, than both — all of which makes it very nutritious. Although cheese made from sheep's milk contains more fat than, say, blue cheese made from cows' milk, the amount of cholesterol in the cheese from cows, goats

and sheep is the same: 45 per cent of the fat in sheep's cheese is as a mono or polyunsaturated form, which should make the arterial system much healthier. The energy-giving value of sheep's milk is 25 per cent greater than the other two.

Sheep's milk is available anywhere in the United Kingdom, and is recommended for people with such allergies as asthma, eczema and other skin problems, or who find that dairy products upset them. Sheep's milk is also said to be good for "neurotics", so that, after all, their variative imaginations might not need homeopathic pills prepared from the milk of an obliging dog.

One group of people who could overcome their objections to sheep's milk with advantage are those prone to osteoporosis, for it may contain up to twice as much calcium as cows' milk, as well as more zinc, magnesium and phosphorus.

● The British Sheep Dairying Association: 01420 563151



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Let me tell you a story

Ben Haggarty is a master of man's oldest tradition. Interview by Erica Wagner

The six-year-olds were silent. No big deal? OK. The six-year-olds were silent for nearly an hour. It was a Friday afternoon at the Science Museum in London, and I watched as they sat enraptured, listening to Ben Haggarty tell stories. Ben is a professional storyteller, and I, too, was spellbound — I don't use the word lightly — as Ben, with no props other than his black suit, bright yellow shirt and a rather extraordinary Burmese temple bell, told stories of magic and monsters that turned the austere lecture theatre around us into a flickering cave of wonder.

Ben Haggarty — one of the foremost figures in the British storytelling revival of the past 20 years and a co-founder (with Hugh Lupton and Pomme Clayton) of The Company of Storytellers — doesn't just tell stories for children. I first encountered him at the British Museum, flanked by winged Assyrian lions, telling a two-hour version of the 5,000-year-old *Epic of Gilgamesh*. His account of the wildman Enkidu's frolics with the Holy Whore was not for the under-sevens.

"I'm interested in the speaking image, the image that speaks," he tells me as we sit in a Polish café, with lemon tea and cheese cake. His voice is strong and flexible, compelling even when he is not in front of an audience. "Something has happened just before; something will happen afterwards, but that moment, there, is full of all that's been and all that's going to come; the art of storytelling is knowing how to choose that moment."

On the eve of World Book Day it seems well to remember that long, long before the book was the story. "Most of the world's literature is oral," says Marina Warner, whose latest work, exploring myth and literature, *No Go The Boggymen*, was published by Chatto & Windus last year. "Many of the things we think of as 'written', such as the Gospels, are actually presented as a kind of transcript. It is only recently that the written has come to

be considered 'authentic', and the oral somehow lesser, or debased."

Michael Ignatieff, the author and critic who has seen Haggarty's work, notes that while novels such as Don DeLillo's *Underworld* and Salman Rushdie's *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* testify that we haven't lost our patience for big stories, oral culture has been reduced to little more than stand-up comedy. But the traditional story still has great value: "The story is the basic organising device for giving information meaning. Our need for information is incorrigible; so our need for stories is incorrigible, too. The danger is when it all gets packaged out to Disney."

Ben Haggarty has no doubts — as no one who has ever heard him would doubt — about the authenticity and continued existence of oral culture. His tales are not memorised but improvised, following a determined path but taking the listener on a different journey each telling. One of the tales I heard him tell was the terrifying *Eaten Father*, *Eaten Mother*, of East European origin, which finds a young prince in flight from Death. ("Kings and death, that's what most storytelling's about," Ben says.) "Once upon a time," he begins, "Once — not twice, not three times, but only once and never again" — that is how it is, the story unfolding in front of you now and now and now.

So what makes a storyteller special? Can anyone tell a story? Haggarty makes a sharp divide between the heartside, or informal, tradition and the professional one. Medieval Irish storytellers, he says, could be trained for up to a dozen years. He clearly sees his own apprenticeship in these terms; he is no amateur. He has a repertoire of about 250 stories, some of which are tellings of the great epics such as *Gilgamesh*, the *Mahabharata* or the Welsh *Mabinogion*, and some of which, like *Eaten Father*, *Eaten Mother*, are drawn from many different traditional sources but fashioned by him.

He has always been drawn to stories



First, there was the word... Ben Haggarty, professional storyteller: children and adults are spellbound by his tales of the gods and monsters that haunt us still

Oral culture has been reduced to stand-up comedy

with aspects of magic and epic. He thought, at first, that he would find what he was looking for in the theatre. In the late 1970s he spent time with the radical theatre company Welfare State International, which had moved away from conventional theatre toward myth and masque. It was while working as a scene shifter — "I was a Cosmic Midwife: I had huge cardboard tits and a big hat with plastic babies hanging from the rim" — at an outdoor performance that he realised he was on the wrong track.

"It had rained and I had to vacuum up all these puddles. And then, just when they were about to start, it began to rain again and I had to vacuum again. We were staying in caravans on a reclaimed rubbish tip, and when I went back to my caravan someone had left a copy of a magazine with photographs of Peter Brook's company performing *The Conference of the Birds* — Helen Mirren and all these people being birds in their ordinary clothes... and I just thought, 'Well, I've spent the whole day vacuuming up bloody puddles! All this cardboard tits and stuff — it's too complicated.'"

So Brook, he assumed, would provide the answer; he took himself to Avignon in 1978 to watch the Brook company over and over again. But Brook convinced him to choose another path. "He helped me to

realise that I wasn't interested in plays — nothing I saw on stage was as good as what I saw in here," he says, a finger at his temple. "It dawned on me: why don't you just go and tell the stories?"

He put in his "flying time," as he calls it, working with multicultural projects in West London in the early 1980s: working in schools, where his vibrant tales can give children of all cultures access to each other's stories, is still a large part of what he does, although changes in school funding have meant that, to his great regret, he is called in less often. He remains involved with London's Crick-Crack Club, of which he was a co-founder in 1987; in 1989 he was in charge of a 15-day international storytelling festival at the South Bank with a budget of £87,000. That, he says somewhat ruefully, "is what turned my hair grey."

He was an adviser, too, to the *Storyteller* series with John Hurt from Jim Henson Productions; he chose the tales. Anthony Minghella wrote the scripts. With The Company of Storytellers, he continues to be involved with that and with the international storytelling festival Beyond the Bor-

ders — "Womad without the tunes," as he calls it — at St Donat's Castle in Wales. He'll be at the Hay Festival with other storytellers. It's a fairly jocular life. How many people do you know who can start a sentence: "So I met this Lakota Sioux woman in Stockport...? Home is now in Worcestershire with his wife, Waz, a painter, and their two children — Blade, 12, and Bethany, ten — but he is hardly ever there."

The sacrifice seems worth it to him. He does what he loves to do and he possesses a rare skill. He says he is never tempted to write down his stories — a tape he made some years ago he withdrew from sale. For a writer this is a strange concept; but Haggarty seems to balance easily between the notions that while what he does is his alone, the stories are not.

American storytellers, he tells me with a sigh, have begun to sue each other for possession of their tales. It is not something he would ever resort to, which he explains by telling me of a trip he took to India a few years ago. Travelling in a rural area, he happened upon a wonderful artist, bought one of his paintings and went off. Two hours later he returned:

"And there was the guy — he had rolled out another piece of paper and was repainting the same work I'd just bought. I heard this voice inside me which said 'Not that's mine!' — that's what the West, with its culture of the individual artist, had taught me. I realised that from his point of view, it wasn't mine. It was a painting he had sold; he would make another one."

The book remains on the shelf, sad: although a reader's response to it may change with each reading, and each reader will understand it differently. The storyteller's work is elusive: the price of your pocket doesn't give you anything you can take away. But if you have a chance to hear the tales which have shaped the dreams of humankind, tales of the gods and monsters that haunt us still, then sit down and listen. You might just discover that you, too, find the plot.

● Ben Haggarty, c/a Traditional Storytelling Projects, Marley Bank, Whitbourne, Wares WR6 8RU; tel: 01386 821576. He and other storytellers will be appearing at the Hay Festival, Hay-on-Wye, Saturday and Sunday May 29, 30. Box office: 01497 821299 or 821217. The Beyond the Borders International Storytelling Festival is at St Donat's Castle, South Glamorgan, July 2-4. Box office: 01446 794848.

Kings and death — that's what it is all about

Celebrity corner

Primrose Hill's literati and glitterati have responded in force to Tina Gaudoin's SOS to SOL — Save Our Libraries

A friend who counts herself a pretty hardened PR expert (and former tabloid journalist) casts her eye over a list of celebrities pinned to my noticeboard. "Hah," she says, "you'll be lucky to get one reply from that lot."

I protest that my list (which admittedly includes such literary heavyweights as Martin Amis and Alan Bennett, alongside such "hot" thespians as Jude Law and Sadie Frost) is in a good cause: to stop the Government closing libraries nationwide and specifically our "local" — Chalk Farm Library, in Primrose Hill, North London. My friend is unconvinced. All celebrities care about, she contends, is themselves.

Primrose Hill certainly has plenty of celebrity inhabitants. At any given moment a host of the notable and notorious can be spotted going about their chores — Ben Elton picking up his dry-cleaning, Alan Bennett cycling, Lucy and Harry Enfield walking their first-born, the Natural Nylon gang (Jude Law, Sadie Frost, Jonny Lee Miller, Sean Pertwee and Ewan McGregor) drinking coffee, and the Gallagher brothers generally misbehaving.

The attraction is not hard to fathom. As Martin Amis noted, PH presents a kind of "pastoral idyll". If anyone were to tell you that just over a mile from the West End there exists an exquisite expanse of green, peopled primarily by a tiny close-knit community (from both ends of the social spectrum) inhabiting sugared, almond-coloured houses and enjoying the kind of "village atmosphere" that could otherwise be found only in the wilds of the Outer Hebrides, you would call him/her a liar or Fay Weldon. (Weldon based part of her book/TV series *Big Women* in the area.)



The actors Sadie Frost, left, and Jude Law; Spice Girl Mel B



Harry Enfield, left; Isabel Fonseca and Martin Amis

praise. He got neither. The barrister, who had no idea who Draper was, merely requested that he remove the life-size cut-out of Bill Clinton from his living-room window as it was scaring his children.

When a group of schoolgirls hung out on the top of Primrose Hill with a bearded, parka-wearing, laconic northern male, it wasn't until he had scrounged a cigarette and ambled off that they acknowledged to each other that it was Liam Gallagher. Spice Girl Mel B also recently experienced the Primrose Hill treatment. A couple of weeks ago she stationed herself, baby, husband and various friends outside The Tea Cosy, a local café. "Nobody bothered her all afternoon," says an observer. "I couldn't tell if she was pleased or put out."

Maybe Camden council thought that residents would display the same indifference when it announced, almost

events began to occur. During a heated exchange of views with my husband over who would unload the dishwasher, Harry Enfield left a message on the answering machine pledging his help. (The headline in *The Camden New Journal* read "Oi Camden! No!")

Letters of support arrived from Sam Mendes and Ben Elton. Mendes, who cast Nicole Kidman in *The Blue Room*, is scandalised: "Primrose Hill Library was where I first experienced the joys of Asterix."

I exited the shower one morning to pick up the phone. "Hello," said a familiar voice. "This is Jonny Lee Miller. Sure I'll help you out." The same day I arrived home to find my baby-sitter hopping from foot to foot: "Sean Pertwee has left a message — he's against library closures." My hero, Alan Bennett, sends a postcard in his spidery scrawl. "You can add my name to your list as long as I can avoid those journalists." I write back and confess that I am one. Isabel Fonseca, Martin Amis's wife, says that Amis will speak out against the closures at a sold-out reading he is giving in Swiss Cottage Library. "I need all the facts," she says.

We are on a roll. Esther Freud agrees to give a reading. Joan Bakewell is pictured in the national press supporting the legal challenge. Rachel Weisz talks about saving PH library to *Tatler*, and Sadie Frost and Jude Law ring to offer support.

So with all this celebrity backing will the Save Our Libraries campaign succeed? Our fingers are crossed. Does Camden feel ashamed of its bid to save £10,000 this year by cutting off the lifeblood of three local communities? It had better. Have Primrose Hill celebrities shown that they care passionately about the world beyond their own their doorsteps? Absolutely.

Interestingly, there's one on my list I have yet to hear from. Strange really: one would imagine that at the moment he might have a bit of time on his hands. Derek Draper, Primrose Hill resident and man of the masses, are you out there?

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The heart of darkness defies reason

It is impossible to know which of our loners will turn killer

In William Golding's novel, *The Lord of the Flies*, Ralph, the well-meaning schoolboy whose friend Piggy has been savagely killed by a gang of his classmates, seeks an explanation for their depravity. What was it that had stripped the veneer of civilisation from a group of middle-class children and turned them into merciless hunters? He finds no answer. He understands that, at some point, they had crossed a gulf from "common sense, their daylight sanity", and had entered a nightmare world of mayhem and revenge from which they could no longer turn back. But the reason why such forces had been unleashed in the first place were, he realised, unfathomable. Rescued, at the last minute, from the brink of that same nightmare, "Ralph wept for the end of innocence and the darkness of man's heart".

It is hard to do other than weep, like Ralph, for the children of the Columbine High School massacre for no better reason than that they were an easy target for un-governed hatred. Where that hatred stemmed from, and why it sought so bloody an outlet, will have to wait until we know more about the members of the gang that carried it out, their personalities, their backgrounds, and their lethal alienation. Already it seems clear from how they behaved and what they wore — the black trenchcoats, the ski masks, the sunglasses, all a crude pastiche out of Quentin Tarantino — that this was an act of vengeance against a society which had, in some real or imagined way, rejected them. But that scarcely begins to explain such sustained and random violence.



Magnus Linklater

Nor does the growing number of similar examples at schools in America and Britain provide much help. Lord Cullen, who conducted the inquiry into the massacre at Dunblane Primary School, heard detailed evidence on the state of mind that had driven the damaged loner, Thomas Hamilton, to murder 17 pupils and their teacher on March 13 1996. Two of the principal psychologists he called disagreed about whether Hamilton was a paranoid personality or a psychopath, but they both ruled out any form of mental illness. He took no drugs, he did not smoke or drink, he had no physical abnormalities. That he was lonely, rejected and embittered was obvious, but it was the sheer banality of his life rather than evidence of his sinister intent that struck the inquiry most forcibly.

Lord Cullen saw Hamilton's repeated failures — sexual, social and professional — as leading up to a fatal point at which the "daylight sanity" referred to by Golding gave way to nightmare madness. But even he could not say what had pitched so vacuous a character into mass murder. "His personality was characterised by a desire to control others in which his guns were the focus of his fantasies," said Cullen. "It seems to me that he lacked any real insight into the fact that his conduct had led to

the decline of his fortunes and in his reputation. In that situation he turned his fantasy into reality in order to achieve control in one final and terrible manner."

We may find elements of this recourse to killing as the ultimate weapon of control from events at Columbine High School. But in other respects the comparison with Dunblane is remote. Instead of the demons inside one grown man, the American killers belonged to a group of adolescents who seem to have fuelled their own sick fantasies by indulging a shared idea.

If it is true that they read neo-fascist propaganda, admired Hitler, and held racist views, then this may have been a catalyst for violence on a scale which no normal human being could otherwise contemplate; and suicide at the end of it would be the final gesture of defiance. A bunch of ordinary dropouts, brought together by extremist views, was transformed into a death squad. "The group that storms the Bastille," wrote Sartre, "is totally different from the group that stands at a bus-stop."

Why children, though, and why choose victims so vulnerable, with weaponry so ferocious? Perhaps the simplest explanation is that killing children is the most repugnant of all crimes, the one that prompts most outrage from a society that is itself despised. In a culture ridden with violence, where images of brutality suffuse film and television, the act that can still shock is the massacre of innocents; choosing the Nazis as a symbol of evil is another way of causing maximum outrage and to target racial minorities is to reject accepted standards of civilised behaviour. The weapons used were those of the terrorist. By opening up with machine-guns and grenades in a school, terrorism becomes domestic.

There may be parallels here with the killing of Stephen Lawrence, or the nail bomb explosion in Brighton. Whatever the role of the white gang investigated by the Macpherson inquiry, there is little doubt that its shared ideas about race, and its violent language, translated into violent action as two of them simulated stabbing attacks. The nail bomb wrought indiscriminate vengeance on society as a whole.

Random they may be, but tragedies like these are far from isolated. The ease with which the gang secured its murderous weapons, the vulnerability of the school, and the fact that the attackers seem deliberately to have copied similar acts of horror, suggest that there will be more to come. However much we learn about those who cross the border from reality to murderous fantasy, we will never find a foolproof way of identifying them in advance. In the end, we will still be confronted by the unimaginable, the darkness of man's heart, for which there is no rational explanation.

comment@the-times.co.uk



We're all Blairites now

The global economic crisis has secured the victory of the Third Way

When Tony Blair arrives in Washington today to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of Nato and to deliver one of his famous seminars on the Third Way, he ought to express some thanks for the unsung heroes of his political triumphs. When he goes to the tomb of the unknown soldier in Arlington, he should pray not only for the Nato pilots in Kosovo, but also for the shanty dwellers of Thailand, the hungry pensioners of Russia and the jobless workers of Korea, who have become the unwitting shock troops of the Third Way's global victory over the dark forces of Thatcherism and Reaganomics.

The great global economic crisis, which started in Thailand and Indonesia nearly two years ago and reached its apogee last summer with the financial collapse in Russia, was one of the luckiest breaks that Bill Clinton and Tony Blair ever had, even in their amazingly lucky careers. Not only did the misfortunes of Thailand, Korea and Russia end up actually helping both the American and British economies. They also, by testing to destruction the free market economic principles of the 1980s, created a worldwide constituency for the Third Way.

The Blair-Clinton style of politics has suddenly become all the rage, even among the predatory capitalists of Wall Street and the former economic fundamentalists of the Republican Right. Peter Lilley's proclamation this week that the market had its limits is only the latest conversion to the new consensus. Nobody seems to believe any longer that markets work best if businesses are simply left to their own devices or that capitalism can avoid booms and busts without active government intervention.

In short, the Third Way faith in "smart" government seems to have triumphed completely over the Thatcher-Reagan doctrine that government is the problem and market forces the solution.

But what has all this to do with the global economic crisis? We can feel free to review the crisis as a historical phenomenon now that it has been declared more or less officially over by Michel Camdessus, the managing director of the International Monetary Fund.

The crisis had profound ideological effects. These were highlighted in the televised address given by President Clinton this Tuesday on

the unlikely subject of "the global financial architecture". President Clinton committed himself to interventions in the ultimate free market — the global financial system — of a kind that American governments have resisted for decades. He said that international financial markets need to be closely regulated by international agencies; that Western countries must commit large sums of public money to Third World debt relief and to safety nets against future financial crises; that Western

stupid it is not even treated as a joke. As for the protestations by the European Central Bank and the Bundesbank that interest rates should not be used as an "instrument of counter-cyclical demand management", people in Washington and on Wall Street respond with cynicism. American bankers argue: "These people in Frankfurt are just lying; trust me, they are not as stupid as they sound."

Even the West's actions in Kosovo have been profoundly affected by new attitudes to national sovereignty, global interdependence and international regulation. Nato's intervention is exactly analogous, and closely related, to the way that global financial institutions such as the IMF and the various G7 bodies took upon themselves unprecedented powers to intervene in the domestic economic affairs of stricken, developing nations in the name of the global economic stability and

financial probity. Ideologically the global financial crisis has dealt a crushing blow to the 1980s doctrines of market fundamentalism and laissez faire geopolitics, opening the field to the universalism and interventionism of the Blair-Clinton Third Way. But the crisis has also helped in a more mundane sense.

The unprecedented political popularity of both Bill Clinton and Tony Blair is a direct byproduct of the global economic crisis. On the basis of all political precedents, the British and American governments should now be in the depths of their mid-term popularity slumps. Yet both Clinton and Blair are as popular today as when they were elected. To many observers this breakdown of the standard political cycle may appear a mystery. But it is quite comprehensible from an economic point of view. Politicians get elected by promising prosperity, low inflation, low taxes, good public services and low interest rates. They

are then punished by the voters when it becomes apparent that they cannot deliver. This normally happens after two years or so. This time, however, neither the British nor American government is succumbing to such a cycle, and the reason is closely connected with the crisis in emerging markets.

This crisis triggered panic in Western financial markets and caused serious suffering for tens of millions of people in developing countries who lost their businesses, savings and jobs. But for Britain and America, whose economies have been growing strongly on the basis of domestic consumption and investment since the mid-1990s, the deflationary shock from emerging markets has been almost completely benign. By early 1997 governments and central banks were already under pressure to raise interest rates and restrain inflation. The godsend for Blair and Clinton was that the global financial crisis intervened, obviating these anti-inflationary measures.

To take the most obvious example, it is almost certain that British interest rates would have been raised a good deal further last year had it not been for the Russian crisis. Whether this more abrupt monetary tightening would have led to a bigger slowdown and a steeper rise in unemployment would have depended on the skill of the Bank of England. But the blame for the resulting economic hardships would certainly have fallen on the Blair Government. A similar story can be told about America, where the strength of the economy and the popularity of Bill Clinton have both been clearly linked to the stellar performance of Wall Street. And nobody on Wall Street any longer disputes that the effect of the crisis in emerging markets on share prices has been extremely benign, by eliminating inflationary pressures and thus pushing interest rates downwards.

The question now is whether these benign effects begin to turn malignant. If, as seems likely, world recovery accelerates strongly in the next 12 months, will policymakers in the US and Britain take the unpopular measures needed to control inflation? Or will they be lulled into a false sense of security by their surfeit of good luck?

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Anatole Kaletsky

vehicles for their destruction. Mr Blair has even compared the four weeks of bomb attacks on Yugoslavia to the process by which "globalisation is opening up the world's financial architecture for discussion, re-evaluation and improvement". War, it seems, is now the continuation of economic integration by other means.

In place of the old system of national legal systems creating free markets and national liberties, a new world order of universal human rights is being set up. The problem is that the bogus notion of human rights can never provide a basis for either the rule of law or morality. Whereas a national system of justice is a self-contained entity which grows with and defines the society in which it inheres, universal human rights are detached from any rootedness in time or place. Their application

therefore inevitably flails around capriciously, according to the latest whim of outrage or the latest bid for victimhood.

It is therefore inevitable that the brave new world of universal human rights is, in fact, a topsy-turvy world of gruesome moral relativism. Why support the KLA, while sidelining the moderate Albanian resistance under Ibrahim Rugova?

Human rights are, by definition, antithetical to the concept of national sovereignty. The idea that there can be such a thing as universal human rights implies that there can be a single global system of civil law with Nato playing the role of world government. But for its sins, mankind has been divided up into different peoples. Any attempt to behave as if this were not so is not moral: it is megalomaniac.

comment@the-times.co.uk



Rock romp

JAMES BOND will battle single-handedly with Spain for control of the Rock of Gibraltar in his next romp. As Pierce Brosnan finishes *The World Is Not Enough*, due to bite fleapits by Christmas, Raymond Benson, the writer authorised by Ian Fleming's literary estate to continue the author's work, is confecting an adventure designed to ruffle Anglo-Spanish relations — with, I gather, cheeky advice from the Foreign Office.

More publicly the FO's emissaries are shunting between London and Madrid to ease tensions over the prickly slab of British territory. José María Aznar, the Spanish PM, called it "a base for kidnapping, assassinations... drug running and money laundering".

It is hoped that 007, who must be knocking back Viagra after all these years, will tangle with the talented Iberian Ines Sastre (with Brosnan below). Bond's new nemesis will be Domingo Espada, an "evil Spanish matador" — but, as Drake proved, the paelia munchers should be a breeze.



CHILDREN being shown round Downing St by Gordon Brown the other night were given a rare treat when the Chancellor decided to pop into No 10 to introduce them to the boss. There, at 8pm, sat Cool Tony in jeans, T-shirt — and slippers.

THAT jointcloth of laddishness, Jeremy Clarkson, was not expelled from his public school as he likes to suggest. Motormouth rumbles that Repton threw him out — for drinking, smoking and slipping into overdrive with local girls. "It wasn't one big thing that got me kicked out," he has said. "Besides bunking off I was caught drinking in the grounds, smoking by the tennis courts, putting Polyfilla in the keyholes and other daft antics."

The mathematics master of 30 years, Russell Muir, says Jezza completed his A levels and was "rather grey". Says Muir: "He didn't distinguish himself in music, sport, the arts, anything." But in a recent survey, sixth formers named Clarkson "the most distinguished Old Reptonian". Roald Dahl chugged in second.

CITY sorts could be taking a Latin-esque siesta at lunch. A Barcelona chain store offering the chance of daytime shut-eye wants to open in London.



A CONDOM called the Euro has flopped in the UK after proving a hit with unionists across Europe. Sales are so droopy here that the Dutch manufacturer is to stop promoting it in Britain. Packets, I am told, are decorated with the EU flag. "Sadly there is not the same enthusiasm for the Euro project in Britain," says Fred Julius, general manager of CMD BV. Andrew Roberts is not surprised: "It is enough to leave most red-blooded Brits feeling rather flaccid."

TO dinner in New York with Ruby Wax, lamenting her fluffy image. "I don't want to be like Faust selling his soul to Aristophanes," Mephistopheles, perhaps?

AS HITLER enthusiasts toast his birthday, I ask David Irving, the historian, how the goosestepper spent the day. "He enjoyed military parades," salivates Irving, "and had rooms packed with presents from German industry. On his 50th birthday he was particularly pleased with a model of the battleship Bismarck."

AS Sarah Ferguson takes Wedgwood to America, where she will spend over half her time, she is giving up her UK office. The staff of four at a new Fergie HQ is to be slimmered to a lone secretary.

JASPER GERARD

'The war is being fought to destroy the very principles which constitute the West. This is not moral: it is megalomaniac'

John Laughland

Among the charred corpses and smoking ruins of Kosovo there lies an unreported casualty. It is not one of the hundreds of physical victims of Nato's bombs but instead a metaphysical one. In 1999 as in 1389, the Blackbird Field has witnessed the defeat of that spiritual body of values which in the postwar period used to be known as the West. This is because the war is being fought to destroy the very principles which constitute the West, namely the rule of law.

Unlike in 1389 however, the enemy is not the Sultan but rather the leaders of the Western nations themselves. It is false to claim, as Tony Blair now does, that Serb mistreatment of the Kosovo Albanians, is the *causa belli*. Instead, the bombing started because President Milosevic refused to allow hostile foreign troops on to Yugoslav soil.

Overturning this refusal remains Nato's overriding purpose. Yet this demand is completely incompatible with the logic of a system of sovereign states, which for the past 350 years has formed the basis of Western politics, liberalism and the rule of law.

To be sure, state sovereignty is not an absolute principle. It can be overridden in certain extreme cases. But the present war is being fought in order to override it in all cases, and to remove it completely as a relevant factor in the new world order. Mr Blair has said the war is being fought for "a new internationalism". Javier Solana, the Nato Secretary-General, has said that its purpose is to establish a precedent for the "new strategic concept" of Nato, namely that it should be able to intervene in the internal affairs of a sovereign state for humanitarian reasons. Nato, by definition, never had

this role when it was set up, as a defensive alliance, protecting the sovereign territory of its members.

If the war is post-national in its aims, it is also post-national in its implementation. Nato, an anonymous international apparatus based in Brussels and acting outside the terms of its own charter, is colluding with a group, the Kosovo Liberation Army, whose structures and goals owe very little to any political programme of national liberation for Kosovo and instead a great deal to the needs of its mafia activities and extensive drug-running network. The only nation involved is Serbia, whose wholesale destruction is certainly going to be the outcome of the war, though not its stated aim.

This is why all the war's main

protagonists are old enemies of nationhood. Nato and the West, Bill Clinton, Mr Blair, Joschka Fischer and Señor Solana form "the new generation of politicians who hail from the progressive side of politics" of which Mr Blair boasts. Commentators have been wrong to chuckle at the apparent conversion of these one-time opponents of US power, for the truth is much worse. This war represents the most complete fulfilment of their deepest internationalist convictions.

Like the conversion of the New Left to the market, its new warmongering should give no comfort to conservative supporters of economic liberalism or the Atlantic alliance. Instead of being systems for the protection of national liberties, both these have now been subverted into

vehicles for their destruction. Mr Blair has even compared the four weeks of bomb attacks on Yugoslavia to the process by which "globalisation is opening up the world's financial architecture for discussion, re-evaluation and improvement". War, it seems, is now the continuation of economic integration by other means.

In place of the old system of national legal systems creating free markets and national liberties, a new world order of universal human rights is being set up. The problem is that the bogus notion of human rights can never provide a basis for either the rule of law or morality. Whereas a national system of justice is a self-contained entity which grows with and defines the society in which it inheres, universal human rights are detached from any rootedness in time or place. Their application

therefore inevitably flails around capriciously, according to the latest whim of outrage or the latest bid for victimhood.

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comment@the-times.co.uk

ARMS AND

... and yet another

... and yet another

IT'S A BUG'S

London Zoo weaves a w

... and yet another



DEMOCRACY IN DANGER

The West must throw lifelines to beleaguered Montenegro

Montenegro, poor, wildly beautiful and with a proud national identity, is the last republic besides Serbia to have stayed in the shrunken Yugoslav federation. It has been miserably rewarded for a loyalty, now severely strained, that Mr Milosevic has held in contempt. The tiny republic has been progressively undermined, first by the heavy economic and human costs of Slobodan Milosevic's onslaughts in Croatia and Bosnia and the UN sanctions imposed on Yugoslavia, then by Belgrade's efforts to destabilise the democratic Government of President Milo Djukanovic, and now by the Kosovo bloodbath which, while opposing Nato airstrikes, Mr Djukanovic has courageously denounced.

This tiny republic, valiantly trying to stay neutral in this conflict, is in grave danger of being torn apart. Yugoslav forces, which have been ratcheting up pressure for weeks, have begun expelling and killing refugees along Montenegro's frontier with Kosovo. The Yugoslav Army is blocking access to Montenegro from Croatia, directly challenging the Government's authority in an area declared a demilitarised zone by the UN, and demanding full control over the police. The Government is defiant, but has reason to fear a military coup. In a country of divided loyalties, whose "Whites" have long wanted union with Serbia and whose "Greens" want independence, its ousting would lead to civil war.

Serbs have no conceivable interest in instigating this disaster. Montenegro was an independent state from the 14th century until 1918, when communist rebels backed by Serb troops and irregulars overthrew its king and declared union with Serbia. Montenegro's Slavs speak a different dialect of Serbo-Croat and until recently, their clan-based society bore little resemblance to that of the Serbian plains. But the two republics have close cultural and religious affinities; and in hard practical terms, Montenegro offers Serbia its only outlet to the Adriatic, and its only naval base. To open a second front there would be political as well as human folly; and Montenegro would be no push-over. The interior police are loyal to the President.

and although they are heavily outnumbered by the 2nd Yugoslav Army based there, many of its conscripts are Montenegrins who could turn against Belgrade.

Mr Milosevic, reckless as he has always been of Serbia's real interest, may calculate otherwise. The youthful Mr Djukanovic, a former ally who has become his most formidable critic, is not just an outspoken opponent he wants out, but a standing rebuke to Belgrade's sullen police state. Since Montenegrins voted him into office in 1997, he has promoted democracy, press freedom, economic modernisation and a tolerant, pluralistic society which respects the political and cultural rights of its large Albanian and other minorities. But it has been a difficult balancing act, and the war has made him temptingly vulnerable.

Enormous tensions are imposed by the arrival of 70,000 Kosovan refugees since the air war started. With 25,000 already there, along with 25,000 Croats and Bosnians, the population of 640,000 has been swollen by a fifth; and the country is also losing \$18-20 million a month from the war, without counting Nato bomb damage. Nato has shouldered a large part of the logistical burden of helping refugees in Albania and Macedonia; Montenegro is on its own, and needs proportionately greater financial support. But that is no longer all.

By destroying Montenegro, Mr Milosevic may think that he would not only efface a political rival; he would demonstrate that Nato was powerless to prevent the devastation of a republic that its air campaign has tried to spare and which it supports as a regional bastion of sanity and reason. On April 2, after Mr Milosevic ominously appointed a crony to command the 2nd Yugoslav Army based in Montenegro, Javier Solana warned Belgrade against unseating Mr Djukanovic, insisting that Nato had "plans to stop" a coup. Yesterday Madeleine Albright spoke only of unspecified "serious consequences". If a plan exists — and Nato's continuing reliance on air power must be cause for doubt — it should be dusted down. For if it is bluff, evidence mounts disturbingly that Mr Milosevic is preparing to call it.

ARMS AND THE BOYS

Americans face yet another school shooting tragedy

After similar incidents in Arkansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Oregon and Pennsylvania in the past few years, the latest tragedy at the Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, might be expected to shock but, sadly, not surprise Americans. Although the scenes are familiar, both the character and location of this shooting are unusual. The use of home-made bombs by teenagers, allegedly based on information obtained from the Internet, is a chilling development. Littleton is a leafy suburb of Denver, not an insular Southern town or a dysfunctional Californian enclave. In that sense, if such an outrage can happen here it could occur almost anywhere in America.

The political reaction in the United States has had a predictable, almost ritualistic, quality. President Clinton has again urged the states to redouble their efforts at "pre-emptive counselling" and asked Congress to consider further gun control measures. Congressional leaders evidently have little appetite for such legislation. The National Rifle Association (NRA), which by perverse coincidence is scheduled to hold its annual convention in Denver next week, has issued its familiar refrain that "guns don't kill people, people kill people". This is obviously true, although teenagers armed with semi-automatic rifles rather than water pistols do tend to be particularly effective at conducting massacres.

The truth, though, is that it is not only the single-minded opposition of organisations such as the NRA that prevents either the various states or Congress itself adopting gun control measures. Colorado's distinctive state constitution allows the electorate to choose to hold a referendum on almost any issue. A simple petition of citizens is

enough to initiate this process. No American state has a more permissive system of popular participation. Denver itself is a very liberal city with a record of electing anti-war activists and radical environmentalists. If really sweeping gun control laws cannot be passed here then, in a sense, they cannot be expected to make much progress anywhere in the United States at present.

The possession of personal arms has in fact become a central issue in the current session of the Colorado state legislature. This proposal, however, supported by the Republican Governor, is to render legal the carrying of concealed weapons by the vast majority of citizens. Similar measures have already been passed in a number of Southern and Western states. The Littleton slaughter may serve to stop this attempt. The fact that it had a respectable prospect of passage until yesterday is a powerful reflection of the prevailing culture in many American states. The most that can be expected is some extension of parental responsibility for the acts of armed minors.

Congress will, of course, face demands to do something. It will studiously avoid any serious constraints on gun ownership and focus instead on the supposed influence of the Internet. There will doubtless soon be proposals put forward for restricting the sort of information that can be posted on this medium. Apart from being virtually unpoliceable in practice, any such legislation would almost certainly (and correctly) be shredded by the US Supreme Court as a transparent violation of the free speech provisions of the First Amendment. The sole and unfortunate conclusion is that the Columbine High School killings are, alas, very unlikely to be the last of their kind.

IT'S A BUG'S WORLD

London Zoo weaves a wondrous Web of Life

Is it Pliny's fault that crawly things give us the creeps? A translation of his *Natural History* introduced the word insect to the English in 1601. And insects, he explained in it, were just "little vermin". The scuttlers and inchers he included in this category — the caterpillars, pismires, grasshoppers and worms — may since have been sorted into more precise phyla, but still the idea lingers that any such creature is little more than a pest to be squashed. Tomorrow's opening of a Web of Life display at London Zoo should therefore be welcomed, for it celebrates not only the loveliness, intricacy and diversity of invertebrates, but also the crucial role that they play. Our entire ecosystem, it seems, is supported on the back of a "bug".

The energy-efficient show space, in itself, gives proof of invertebrate relevance. Modelled on the complex structures evolved by termites to maintain even temperatures in the hottest, most inhospitable places on Earth, the glass-sided building is chilled in summer by the geothermic cooling effects of a borehole, while the five chimneys which diffuse the stale winter warmth, mimic the ventilating architecture of a termite mound.

When construction of this building began, London Zoo's wolf pack was removed to quieter surroundings. Residents of Primrose Hill missed the untamed night howls which tinted urban dreams. But in welcoming a breeding pair of threatened maned wolves to Regent's Park as part of the Web of Life exhibit, they will be reminded that it is upon the myriad plenitude of invertebrate life that the survival of such fine predators depends. Maned wolves in the wild snack on beetles, on insectivorous rodents such as the mouse or shrew. If biodiversity is to be maintained, if such gravely endangered species as the golden headed lion tamarin or the bleeding heart dove are to be rescued, the multitudinous tiny creatures which help to support them must also be preserved.

The fibrils of the food chain may seem as imperceptible as the minuscule brine shrimp, as frangible as the brittle star, but they are as ubiquitous as the bluebottle, as long as the Mombassan train millipede, as complex as the mosaic of a postman butterfly's wing. This is what visitors will learn. They will be connected to so intricate a web of life that they will gaze twice before they decide to stamp or swat again.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Differing views on decommissioning

From Mr John McPhie

Sir, How ill-served the people of Northern Ireland are by their elected representatives (leading article, April 20). They have made their wishes clear in a referendum and yet the politicians cannot deliver. Perhaps they don't really want to deliver. If they did and Northern Ireland enjoyed a peaceful, normal existence there would be no more visits to the Oval office, no media attention; how boring life would become (and how utterly blissful it would be for the rest of us not to have to listen to their never-ending, pointless, illogical, circular arguments).

It is time for the issue of decommissioning to be forgotten. For the IRA and for others it smacks of surrender and it will never happen. If it is done in token form (which would more than likely be the case), it will be meaningless, and, anyway, vast quantities of new weapons are readily available to any willing buyer. The whole point is whether the weapons are being used or not — and they are not.

Decommissioning is not a principle that is going to affect the future of Northern Ireland. It is easy to understand why it was originally included in the Good Friday agreement, but it is not set in stone and, for the sake of peace, it must be dropped.

It is beholden on the politicians to deliver the peace the Province craves — and soon. The price of peace has been too high for it to be lost because of the myopia, intransigence, selfishness and lack of imagination of certain Northern Ireland politicians.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN MCPHIE,
Rampton Prebend,
Westgate, Southwell NG25 0JH.
April 20.

From Mr Harry Barnes, MP for North East Derbyshire (Labour)

Sir, Your leader argues that the British and Irish Governments should be willing to "park" the Good Friday agreement until the autumn. This would be what is termed a "soft landing" rather than a "crash landing".

However, there is another option canvassed eloquently by *The Irish Times* in its own leader of April 19. It notes the dangers of the Belfast agreement unravelling if it is parked, and possibly a reversion to large-scale violence — fuelled by confrontations over the marching season and Drumcree. It raises the possibility of allowing the creation of a power-sharing executive without Sinn Féin until such a time as Sinn Féin can join the peace train further down the line.

There is much merit in this alternative approach. It must be clear to most people in these islands, and to international opinion, that all major items have been resolved or are in the process of being resolved with the sole exception of decommissioning.

Given the IRA's bloody record and the dangers of vast arsenals being raised, used again or poisoning the political process, a modest gesture on decommissioning is the very least that democrats can accept for bringing Sinn Féin into the heart of government.

Let us accept the word of Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness that they cannot deliver on this. But let us still allow them further time to do so, without throwing away the massive gains that the Belfast agreement represents.

Yours sincerely,
HARRY BARNES,
House of Commons.
April 20.

Bombing of Serbia

From Group Captain D. A. P. Saunders-Davies, RAF (retd)

Sir, The Armed Forces know only too well that there is no such thing as an infallible weapon nor an infallible operator. Moreover, it has been a part of doctrine for many years that, while you cannot win a war without air power, neither can you win it with air power alone.

I would lay long odds that the Chiefs of Staff briefed strongly against the Serb reaction might be. They were overruled by politicians adopting a high moral tone having never seen a shot fired in anger.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID SAUNDERS-DAVIES,
Home Farm Cottage,
Ower, Hampshire SO51 5AN.

From Dr Tony McAllister

Sir, The term "surgical strikes" has been demonstrated by the recent killing of both Serbs and Albanians by Nato bombs to be the callous and inaccurate description it has always been. Nato has tried to blame these deaths on Mr Milosevic, but this just would not wash. Dropping bombs kills people, and it was Nato who did the dropping.

Whatever Mr Milosevic and his troops have done, it does not justify continuing this lethal bombardment. Please let us stop the bombing and resume talks about the future of this region of Serbia.

Yours faithfully,
TONY McALLISTER,
4 Redwoods,
Bengeo, Hertford SG14 3BT
April 15.

Calling time on the coronets?

From Mr Paul N. Arthur

Sir, The recent level of correspondence on the reform of the House of Lords (letters, March 30, 31; April 6, 13, 15) shows how successful new Labour's spin operation has been. The fact is that it is not the House of Lords (which works perfectly well as it is) which needs reforming but the House of Commons. This, as Peter Riddell has observed on several occasions, could be done by strengthening the power of select committees, allowing for a much more rigorous and effective examination of the executive.

As for the Lords, there is much to say for an appointed, elected and hereditary element, together with a proportion of seats allocated by lot. In the meantime, so long as the focus of attention remains the reform of the second chamber, I shall continue to read the letters you publish with amusement.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL N. ARTHUR,
12 Braewood Gardens,
Park-Hill Rise, Croydon CR0 5JL.
pnarthur@msn.com
April 20.

From Mr W. Dixon Smith

Sir, There can be no more appropriate name for a reformed upper chamber than "The House of Lords" and no more appropriate titles for its members than "Lords and Ladies".

The House of Lords, under such

designation, forms part of our British tradition in the truest sense of that much abused phrase: that is to say, it retains a clear and undeniable function. It is a political workshop, and its members political workers.

In spite of the determination of successive Prime Ministers to transform it into a retreat for the recipients of empty honours and for party nominees, the House of Lords has often better represented the views of the British people than has the "democratic" Commons.

Of course, if the workaday titles of "Lords and Ladies" are to be retained for elected members, then those who presently sport costume jewellery coronets will have to lay them aside.

Yours sincerely,
W. DIXON SMITH,
6 Welland Rise,
Acomb, York YO26 5HH.
April 18.

From Mr T. Pearce

Sir, Would it not be a good idea to reintroduce the University Seats as part of the elected body of a reformed second chamber?

This could give a group of independent members chosen by a well-educated electorate.

Yours faithfully,
T. PEARCE,
22 Shaftesbury Road,
Beckenham, Kent BR3 3PW.
April 20.

Devolution challenge for Labour

From Mr David Procter

Sir, I read with some incredulity your leading article today describing the Chancellor of the Exchequer as the "Defender of Britain" and referring to "perceived English resentments" over devolution. The West Lothian question is a matter of genuine and legitimate concern, not least because Labour Governments elected in the United Kingdom have only twice ever had a majority of English MPs.

In future, while the Scottish assembly looks after its own domestic affairs, the historical likelihood is that Labour Governments will actually be opposed by a majority of English MPs, but sustained by Scottish MPs, in presiding over English domestic affairs. It does not amount to an outbreak of Braveheart xenophobia to point out that this is illogical and unreasonable.

We have grown used to hearing members of the Government spinning their way out of this sort of ill-considered muddle with warm words — in this case an appeal to the English "sense of fair play". But it is disappointing to see you accepting a line that could not be further from fair play — let alone common sense.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID PROCTER,
36 London Road,
Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 2AA.
April 16.

From Mr S. Hodson-Pressinger

Sir, Following Gordon Brown's warning Britain against a "retreat into fac-

ionalism", we read today that reunified Germany is moving its parliament back to Berlin. Surely there is a lesson to be learnt here?

Germany's constituent states, despite their differences, are not separatist. They are content to remain absorbed into a federal system.

Germans do not wish to see their country fragmenting and reverting back to a collection of small independent states. They are aware of the price paid in unification and the advantages unity has brought. Furthermore, they realise size affects their influence and power, both internationally and within the European Union.

Clearly, Scottish and Welsh separatists could learn from such German pragmatism.

Yours faithfully,
SELWYN HODSON-PRESSINGER,
4 Lyall Street,
Belgrave SW1 X8DW.
April 19.

From Mr William M. Ballantine

Sir, It is all very well for Gordon Brown to tell us all how wonderful it is to be British, but he seems to forget that part of the reason for the rise of the SNP was the language of neo-nationalism used by the Labour Party in Scotland for the past ten years.

Yours faithfully,
W. M. BALLANTINE,
47 The Quarryknoves,
Dean Road, Bogness,
West Lothian EH51 0QJ.
April 16.

Millennium denial

From Mr Michael Shaw

Sir, Further to Barry Hyman's letter (April 16), what are we, who are bloody-minded enough to celebrate the millennium at the right time, going to say to those who aren't, on January 1 next? Do we wish them "Happy Exciting Number Change" or welcome them to the year that puts the 20 in 20th century?

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL SHAW,
88 Underdale Road,
Shrewsbury SY2 5EE.
April 16.

Age of consent

From Mr D. J. Littleford

Sir, Whilst completely sympathetic to the debate over the age of consent (letters, April 6, 10, 13, 16), I was concerned over the poll results in the Stonewall advertisement (April 13).

In response to the question "Do you believe that in Britain the age of consent should be equal for everyone or not [my italics]?", it appears that 110 per cent (yes, 66 per cent; no, 44 per cent) of the representative sample had a view. But then no wonder they were confused, as it is clearly impossible to answer the question yes or no! Lies, damned lies and statistics?

Yours faithfully,
D. J. LITTLEFORD,
29 Hill Rise,
Poters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 2RX.
April 13.

A proper pride

From Mrs Anne Barnard

Sir, Judging by his letter (April 15), Dr Ian Olson has forgotten that many of us do celebrate a great poet on St George's Day, which is also Shakespeare's birthday. Larkin indeed!

Yours faithfully,
ANNE BARNARD,
104 Salmon Street, NW9 8NJ.

Letters may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.
e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

Cost of repairs to listed buildings

From Mr John R. Lawrenson

Sir, VAT on church repairs (leading article, April 5; letters, April 12) is a side issue, albeit very important in the amount of money raised voluntarily, handed over with pain to the Government, and graciously returned in part via a cosy quango.

The real question concerns the ownership of churches. Since nationalisation some 465 years ago they have belonged, not, as many assume, to the Church of England, but to the State, and the sad truth is that they have suffered the same fate as nationalised industries.

It would seem both unfair and bad business to allow the Church of England to continue the myth of ownership and the practice of bad management. Better for the State to give all the churches back to those who raised the money to build them in the first place, the parishes. The burden of upkeep rests now on the declining number of elderly people on parochial church councils.

Very often the church is the only real heritage a parish possesses. Hand to the parish members the responsibility of looking after what is, after all, theirs. If they decline the offer, so be it. That church is going to fall down anyway.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN R. LAWRENSON,
The Old Rectory,
Great Waddingfield,
Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 0TL.
April 13.

From Mr David Morton

Sir, Churches are not the only organisations troubled by the cost of maintaining and repairing listed buildings. The vast majority of listed buildings are houses, notably stately homes. However, most listed houses are family-sized dwellings, and it is with our stock of domestic listed buildings that the main issue arises.

Most of the repair burden falls on individual homeowners — in many parts of the country on low incomes — for whom the VAT on maintenance is a serious financial handicap.

A maintenance backlog leads to a decline in the condition of our historic built environment. This institute therefore does not support VAT on repairs to any listed building and welcomes the current investigations by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions.

Possibilities of abuse are often portrayed, but a robust listing process would obviously prevent this. A maximum level of claim in any one year would actually encourage long-term maintenance.

Our illogical system allows relief from VAT for a listed building home extension which the owner can clearly afford, but not a repair which he or she may not be able to, yet which can help to preserve the fabric for future generations to enjoy.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID MORTON
(Convener, Design and Conservation, Historic Environment Panel),
The Royal Town Planning Institute,
26 Portland Place, W1N 4BE.
April 16.

Church 'prudery'

From the Reverend Clive L. Rawlins

Sir, Apropos the Archbishop of Westminster's comment on "society's apparent preoccupation with sex" (letter, April 13), one wonders if it is not the Church rather than society that is so smitten?

There are ten commandments and nine beatitudes — not to mention many more ethical exhortations in the New Testament — but we hear and see comparatively little exhortation on their transgression, not least against such antisocial sins as greed and pride and self-righteousness. Surely "Judge not" is the first principle of love.

Is it not time that the Church took these things more seriously and learnt to celebrate the joys of sex, recognising without embarrassment the proper attractions of a pretty face or figure, and normalised its attitudes to these without this constant knee-jerk censoring?

Anyone who has lived abroad for any length of time is positively assaulted by our obsessive prudery on returning home: "To the pure all things are pure."

Yours sincerely,
CLIVE RAWLINS,
Thistle Cottage,
Upper Botton,
East Lothian EH41 4HW.
April 13.

Thatcher remembered

From Sir George Engle, QC

Sir, During Lady Thatcher's tenure of No 10 (Libby Purves's article, "Blue remembered thrills", April 20), when relations between her and the Civil Service were far from happy, one of the hot-air hand-drying devices in the Gents near the Cabinet Office Mess (where I used to go for lunch) carried, in Chinagraph, the words "For a personal message from the Prime Minister, press the red button."

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE ENGLE,
32 Wood Lane, N6 5UB.
April 20.

Compaq's \$281m poor show

BEN ROSEN, chairman and acting chief executive of Compaq, yesterday described the computer maker's performance this year as "unacceptable", underlining the need for the boardroom bloodletting that took place on Sunday (Adam Jones writes).

First-quarter sales rose almost 66 per cent to \$9.4 billion (£5.8 billion). Analysts had been expecting \$9.9 billion before the warning. Net profits turned out to be \$281 million, or 16 cents a share, when analysts had originally hoped for 31 cents.

Compaq's warning this month caused the shares to plummet by nearly a quarter and prompted the departure of Eckhard Pfeiffer, its chief executive.

NTT anger at Byers in C&W bid battle

By CHRIS AVRES

THE British Government yesterday came under fierce attack from Japan's state-controlled telephone company, Nippon Telegraph and Telephone (NTT), for interfering in the takeover battle for its smaller rival, International Digital Communications (IDC).

The criticism was made as Cable & Wireless, one of Britain's largest telephone companies, raised its estimated £63 billion (£330 million) cash bid for IDC. IDC's board has already recommended a takeover offer from NTT, but the company's shareholders have not yet accepted it.

The British Government became involved in the increasingly bitter takeover battle when

Stephen Byers, Trade and Industry Secretary, wrote to the Japanese Government saying that "in our view, a successful bid by NTT would raise issues of competition and regulatory policy". This is because the Japanese Government not only owns a controlling stake in NTT, but also regulates the country's telecommunications industry.

NTT's president, Junichiro Miyazu, yesterday responded to Mr Byers's letter, saying: "I don't understand what motivated them [the British Government] to say such things. After all, it's a talk between private companies. It is about what gets decided in the market."

He refused to comment on whether NTT would raise its

original bid for IDC in response to C&W's fresh offer.

Meanwhile, Britain's Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) stood by its criticism of NTT. One DTI source said: "If it was about a commercial company, it would be different, but it's not, it's about state-controlled NTT."

However, leading telecoms analysts in London have given warning that C&W's aggressive negotiating tactics could irreparably damage the company's reputation in Japan — whose telecoms market is about to explode thanks to deregulation.

C&W sources yesterday responded to this criticism by arguing that the company was

being "deliberately non-aggressive". "We are paying our respect to Japanese culture," one insider said, adding that if the company had been involved in a similar situation in the US it would have issued a writ by now. "But we are not going to just roll over," the source said.

C&W hopes that its revised bid — that analysts say could be worth anything up to £76 billion — will win over IDC's founder shareholders, including Toyota, the car company, and the Itochu trading group. The offer is understood to include job security assurances for IDC's employees.

C&W yesterday said that its offer had been met with "considerable interest".

Britannia could face £1m bill as Hardern pulls out

By SUSAN EMMETT

BRITANNIA building society could face costs of up to £1 million, after Michael Hardern, the freelance butler and carpetbagger, yesterday withdrew his candidature for the board.

However, Britain's third largest building society said last night it was seeking legal advice on whether his handwritten note, delivered to a London branch, constituted a formal withdrawal. Britannia expects to make an announcement this afternoon.

If the note is legal, the building society will face huge costs rebalancing its members and setting up another general meeting within a month.

The withdrawal comes only a few days before the vote, which should have been held at the society's annual meeting in Stoke-on-Trent next Thursday.

Britannia said the move will bring the total cost of opposing Mr Hardern to £3 million. The building society has already spent £2 million urging its two million members not to vote for the butler.

Mr Hardern, who has twice stood for the board of Nationwide Building Society, sought to force the Britannia to convert to a bank.

The remaining four candidates for the board, which includes the society's chairman Dr Calum MacLeod, are said to be firm supporters of mutualism.

Mr Hardern said: "I realised that I stand no chance of winning, so decided to withdraw. The whole thing is fixed. Although I knew this when I entered, I only recently came to the conclusion that the best thing to do was to pull out. It's their problem if they now have to rebalot themselves."

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Scottish unions shy away on PFI curbs

SCOTTISH unions yesterday backed away from a showdown with the Government over the Private Finance Initiative (PFI), despite fierce condemnations of the policy which involves private money in public infrastructure projects. The decision to abandon a call for a halt to PFI projects in Scotland came after Gordon Brown brokered a deal last weekend with key union leaders. He offered them more rights on employment conditions and involvement in the bidding process.

The Scottish Trades Union Congress in Glasgow backed a diluted statement from its general council, which said that while it was opposed in principle to PFI, "proper framework agreements, may offer a way forward". But Frank Healey, of the Educational Institute of Scotland, attacked the policy — on which Labour's pledge for new hospitals and schools in Scotland depends — as "a parasite on the education of our children and the health of our members".

Reed Executive ahead

SHARES of Reed Executive rose more than 10 per cent yesterday as the personnel company announced a jump in profits last year and a bullish outlook on current trading. Full-year pre-tax profits for 1998 were £16 million (£14.1 million) on turnover of £243 million (£226 million) on a small swing towards permanent recruitment. The final dividend is 1.8p per share giving a total for the year of 3.6p against 3p in 1997. The shares rose 13½p to 127½p, having picked up from 72½p at the start of the year.

R-R £100m contract

ROLLS-ROYCE, the aerospace and defence group, has signed contracts worth about £100 million for the supply and support of Adour Mk 871 engines for Hawk Mk115 advanced jet trainers. The jet trainers will be used in the Nato Flight Training Canada (NFTC) programme. The contracts with British Aerospace, maker of the Hawk, and Canada's Bombardier, cover installed and spare engines for the 18-aircraft fleet starting NFTC operations next year. An engine maintenance agreement is also included in the package.

AstraZeneca sues

ASTRAZENECA, the newly merged pharmaceuticals group, is taking legal action in the US to resist the latest threat of generic competition to Losec, the Astra ulcer drug that is the world's best-selling medicine. Astra is suing Cheminor Drugs of India, and its American affiliate, Reddy Cheminor, which hope to market an unbranded version of the drug. Analysts believe the expiry of key patents will expose Losec to generic competition from late 2001.

Profits up at LSH

LAMBERT SMITH HAMPTON, the property adviser, said it is benefiting from its switch away last year from acting as a conventional chartered surveyor to catering for the growing trend in outsourcing property services. In the year to January 31, the group, which now has more than 10,000 clients on its books, saw pre-tax profits rise 23 per cent to £4.7 million on turnover up 13 per cent to £47.5 million. The final dividend of 3.7p (3.4p) brings the full-year total to 5.6p (4.5p).

EXCHANGE RATES

	Bank	Bank
Australia \$	2.58	2.41
Austria Sch.	21.85	20.19
Canada \$	64.21	56.35
Denmark Kr.	5.12	5.24
France Fr.	0.0193	0.0207
Germany DM	11.85	10.96
Italy Lit.	5.69	5.08
Japan Yen	15.56	8.91
Netherlands Gld	10.41	9.83
New Zealand \$	3.125	2.854
Norway Kr.	82.1	49.2
Portugal Esc.	13.28	12.08
Spain Ptas.	130	110
Sweden Kr.	175.31	125.31
Switzerland Fr.	1.2478	1.1588
Taiwan N.T.	6.86	6.52
UK £	2.110	2.873
USA \$	2.0754	1.8871
Yen	0.679	0.650
Yen	3.530	3.235
Yen	3.08	2.84
Yen	13.12	12.18
Yen	316.23	294.26
Yen	10.43	9.46
Yen	263.89	244.81
Yen	14.29	13.19
Yen	2.517	2.359
Yen	638.91	596.42
Yen	1.714	1.971

Rates for small denomination banknotes as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates at close yesterday.

NET PROFITS

www.times-money.co.uk

Unions hail new Ford deal

By CARL MORTISHED

FORD is to produce a new model at its car assembly plant in Dagenham as part of a deal struck with unions which will introduce more flexible working practices and safeguard up to 30,000 jobs.

The deal will reverse a steady decline in the fortunes of the Essex plant, which is currently working a four-day week due to a slump in sales of the Fiesta on the Continent. A one-week total shutdown of Dagenham production is still scheduled to commence on Monday.

Dagenham unions hailed the agreement as a turning-point in the plant's fortunes. Steve Turner of the Transport & General Workers' Union said it was the result of a two-year trade union initiative aimed at achieving world-class status for the plant.

Ken Jackson, AUEW general secretary, said: "It demonstrates the tangible benefit of unions and management working together rather than adopting confrontational attitudes."

The deal confirms that Dagenham will continue to assemble new model Fiesta



Ron Doel, union convenor, left, with his colleague Steve Riley in Dagenham yesterday

cars, expected to be launched in before 2002. In addition, Dagenham will be the single source of a new Ford model for Western Europe, believed to be a "people carrier", with plans for 150,000 units per year.

The new deal is similar to the package recently agreed between unions and Rover in Birmingham. More flexible working hours and job mobility will be introduced as well as a reduction in overtime, enabling management to gear

working hours to production levels.

The new deal will increase capacity at Dagenham from 272,000 units to 300,000 and will balance Fiesta production between Dagenham and Ford's plant in Cologne, Germany.

Question:
What did the MD
say to the IT Director?

Answer:
Nice web site,
but what
does it do
for our
business?

Sometimes technology falls short of its promise. Maybe it's your first site. Or you've tried to build your brand online. Or you just can't get your sales-order application to connect with your manufacturing system. It takes a lot of experience to understand what works and what doesn't. At USWeb/CKS, we've handled over 3,000 client engagements. We create, build and deploy successful sites that combine e-commerce, targeted marketing, customer management and more. Contact us to find out how.

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COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

For a Dutch economist, Wilhelm Buiter exhibits a surprisingly deep knowledge of the works of Lewis Carroll. In his latest treatise on the single European currency, he refers readers to *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and suggests that their researches should progress through the looking glass to *The Hunting of the Snark* and on to *An Agony in Eight Fits*.

If the first few months of the single currency have been far from comfortable, Professor Buiter clearly believes there is worse to come.

In fact, although an avowed believer in a federal Europe with one currency, he is indeed fearful for the future of the euro. He argues that the structure of the European Central Bank, and the way it is operating, pose a threat to its independence. And if its independence is in doubt, then there will be scope for grievance and even the prospect of some countries bouncing out of the currency.

Professor Buiter wants to see more openness and accountability for the ECB. As a member of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee, he has emerged as something of a fan of our central bank and its chief banker. In a back-handed compliment, he suggests that if Britain were in the single currency, Europe would benefit from a "one man awkward squad" at the ECB's meetings — Eddie George.

The Bank of England's Governor might be able to prevail upon the ECB to publish the minutes of its meetings while they still have some relevance. Instead, Wim Duisenberg, the determined ECB President, has advocated a discreet silence of 16 years. Professor Buiter, who would be an avid reader of the minutes at the earliest available opportunity, sums up the Duisenberg attitude as: so long as Daddy brings home the bacon, then Mummy and the children have no business asking how he may have come by it.

But at the end of the 20th century, Daddy's behaviour immediately becomes the subject of inquiry and suspicion. The MPC actually speeded up the publication of its own minutes in order to quell the counterproductive speculation that preceded them.

Sophisticated economies need to know the thinking that is going into central bank decisions. So Professor Buiter also wants to see ECB voting records published and the inflation forecasts which are influencing policy.

Yet as a member of the MPC, he will know that even the most open approach to determining monetary policy can hit prob-

lems. It would be interesting to read unabridged minutes of the meetings at which the MPC discussed the flawed earnings figures that led them to hike up interest rates unnecessarily last year. And it would be equally intriguing to hear their reaction to yesterday's new figures, replete with bonuses, which purport to show an upward trend once more, but beg more questions than they answer.

Moment of truth for euro-doubters

The Jabberwocky does not feature in a new pamphlet by Professor Sir James Ball but he does share Professor Buiter's view that the single currency could end in the Pool of Tears.

The title of his work gives the game away: *The European Single Currency: A Bad Idea*. The former principal of the London Business School who

went on to chair Legal & General, is now on the advisory council of New Europe, one of the burgeoning number of pressure groups arising to campaign for or against Britain's membership of the single currency.

New Europe favours a single market without benefit, or strictures, of a single currency and all that entails. Its members would have been nodding in agreement with much of what Professor Buiter, from the opposing camp, had to say. The following passage would have merited cheers of approval: "The whole European integration experiment, from the Coal and Steel Community on, has been a political wolf dressed in economic sheep's clothing."

New Europe could have chorused "Told you so". Instead, Sir James ventured to wonder aloud on the position of BP. The former chairman is now ensconced in the House of Lords, a Minister with a European mission. But Lord Simon's successor, Sir John

Browne, has turned BP into BP Amoco, a global business and one which might be expected to prefer the dollar to the euro as a currency of first choice.

The voices of many business leaders have been raised to sing the benefits that would flow to them of Britain joining the single currency but these are not immediately apparent to all those who are trading internationally. Yet while these people are prepared to voice their doubts privately, few are prepared to publicly say something which they believe would be unpopular with the Government. The bantling is left to the old warhorses such as Sir Stanley Kalms, Lord Hanson, Lord Young et al.

But in the next few months, the Euro-doubters who are running British businesses are going to have to be brave and voice their qualms. Otherwise, they will lose the battle by default. The CBI, an organisation which has made clear its allegiance to the single

currency, has now lined up Sir Iain Vallance to succeed Sir Clive Thompson as President. The BT chairman is as keen on the euro as the Rentokil initial chairman he will succeed. The chances are that Adair Turner's successor as Director-General is unlikely to be a sceptic.

Panel takes a beating over CSG

The strange and complex brouhaha surrounding Corporate Services Group is in danger of making the Takeover Panel seem foolish. The panel has ruled that Michael Ashcroft must proceed with a takeover offer that he does not want to make, and which shareholders do not want even to consider until the employment company's boardroom has been turned inside out. The likelihood is that Mr Ashcroft will now make a revised offer that will inevitably fail — although in a blizzard of disinformation, some suggest Mr A remains keen on CSG.

Mr Ashcroft made his offer conditional on there being no changes to CSG's board — strange given CSG's two profit warnings last month. Still, it's

his offer and the panel was fully aware of the condition. Pressure from angry shareholders threatens to remove five directors and appoint three new ones — but the panel views this turmoil as not sufficiently material to allow Mr Ashcroft to let his offer lapse.

The panel is left deciding what is important to the acquiring company. What will happen if CSG's 1998 results are qualified or show profits of less than £19 million — which, on the face of it, would trigger other conditions of the Ashcroft bid? It is clearly important that bidders should not be able to impose frivolous conditions that allow them to withdraw offers on a whim. But this case risks leaving bidders too vulnerable to the commercial judgments of the panel.

At Liberty

LIBERTY is to get a not-so-new look. The Regent Street store is cleverly consulting with National Heritage to come up with a redevelopment scheme that will be appropriate and more affordable one than the grandiose plan that eventually scuppered the Denis Cassidy regime. But will Philip Bowman be there to see it through? He took on the role of chairman before becoming finance director at Allied Domecq and the chances are that he may have his eyes on advancement. He could need his liberty.

More cuts on the way at DFS as profits slip again

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

DFS, the furniture retailer, saw interim profits fall by a third after it was forced to cut prices by an average of 4 per cent in a competitive market.

Yesterday, Sir Graham Kirkham, DFS executive chairman and founder, said prices are set to come down further in the second half.

Sir Graham last year reported the first fall in DFS annual profits in its 30-year history.

Pre-tax profit in the six months to January 30 was £12 million, down from £18.2 million a year earlier. Sales rose from £130 million to £137.9 million, boosted by new store openings. Like-for-like sales, ignoring new space, were down 7.4 per cent.

The company's operating margin fell from 13.2 per cent a year earlier to 8 per cent. Earnings per share fell from 11.5p to 7.5p, but the interim dividend is being maintained at 4.4p.

Sir Graham said that the company intends to increase its proportion of own-manufactured products from 10 to 15 per cent. It plans to increase



Kirkham: "strongly placed"

the capacity of its Doncaster factory, at the cost of about £500,000.

Spending on advertising has increased as a proportion of sales to over 10 per cent, he said. New advertising campaigns are intended to be more "aspirational" and focused on younger consumers. It is also less focused on interest-free credit.

Sir Graham said that "with-in what remains a tough business environment for all furniture retailers, we believe that DFS is achieving a satisfacto-

ry performance and is continuing to gain market share."

DFS is "champing at the bit and strongly placed to take advantage of any upturn," he said.

He estimated that DFS' share of the upholstered furniture market is between 12 and 13 per cent. The company has brought in a new buying team and which has begun to introduce new ranges.

Three new stores opened during the first half, at Maidstone, Hanley (Stoke-on-Trent) and Southampton. Since the beginning of the second half, a new store has been opened at Beckton, off London's North Circular Road. Another has opened at Bolton. Sir Graham said he hopes to maintain the store opening programme at around five per year.

Stores have been refurbished at Gainshead, Bury St Edmunds and Cannock. The Preston, Darlington and Kings Lynn stores are due to be refurbished in the second half. Capital expenditure in the first half totalled £8.4 million (£7.3 million).

Tempos, page 32

NTL kicks Newcastle bid into touch

By JASON NISSE

NTL, the cable TV group, yesterday dropped its planned £160 million offer for Newcastle United, the Premier League football club.

The US-owned company said that comments in the Mo-

nopolies & Mergers Commission report blocking BSkyB's bid for Manchester United made it clear that an offer for Newcastle by NTL would be blocked.

Newcastle shares fell 5p to 73½p in reaction. "If there was any way we

thought we could have won we would have gone ahead," said Geoffrey Hamilton-Fairley, the chief executive of Premium TV, the NTL subsidiary which would have owned Newcastle.

NTL said it has studied the MMC report and it became

clear that the competition authorities were fundamentally opposed to media companies owning football clubs.

It had agreed a deal in which it bought an initial 63 per cent stake from the Hall family, which controls the club, and in which it would

pay 11t.7p a share for the Halls' remaining 51 per cent stake.

NTL said it will retain its holding and if the regulatory environment changed, it would renew its interest.

Tempos, page 32

Spring Ram sells Stag for £4.25m

Spring Ram Corporation, the household fittings and furniture manufacturer, is to sell its Stag Holdings furniture business to a management team for £4.25 million in cash and shares. The company will take a £12.7 million loss on the disposal. Stag was acquired by Spring Ram in 1992 for £12.4 million and was profitable in 1993 only. For the year ended January 2, 1999, Stag incurred an operating loss of £900,000, before exceptional items, on turnover of £27.9 million.

WPP expands

WPP Group, the advertising and business services company, has acquired the business of CP in the US, which provides outsourced customer care services focusing on the information technology sector, for an undisclosed sum.

Talks confirmed

Shares of Inn Business rose 6½p to 77½p as the tenanted pub group confirmed that it is in takeover talks with Alchemy Partners, the venture capitalist. Analysts are betting on a bid of 80p-90p per share, valuing Inn Business at up to £72 million.

Novartis slides

Novartis, the Swiss healthcare group, is continuing to suffer sluggish sales, with its first quarter turnover falling 1 per cent to SwFr7.87 billion (£3.2 billion). Its shares fell about 3.5 per cent.



Lasmo in sale to French gas utility

By CARL MORTIMER, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

GAZ DE FRANCE is expanding in the UK with the £90 million purchase of a package of southern North Sea gas assets from Lasmo and the acquisition of a gas marketing company, Volunteer Energy.

GDF Britain, a subsidiary of the French gas utility, is buying Lasmo's interest in the Calmer, Boulton Hunter, Chiswick and Cavendish fields as well as pipeline systems and exploration acreage. The fields have proven and probable reserves of 12.2 million barrels of oil equivalent and Lasmo said that it would book a profit of £14 million on the sale.

Keith Lough, of Lasmo,

said: "We have realised full value from this package of assets, which were non-core to Lasmo and are clearly worth more to a company with an interest in the European gas business."

The deal will help Gaz de France to secure supplies of gas as France has dwindling reserves of the fuel.

It is also paying £2 million for Volunteer, a deal that follows the French state-owned company's move to sell gas in Britain via the Interconnector. UK gas prices are higher than on the Continent, where prices are linked to the weak price of fuel oil, allowing Gaz de France to profit from exports to the UK.

Ashcroft forced to go on with bid

By PAUL DURMAN

SHAREHOLDERS in Corporate Services Group, the troubled employment company at the centre of a complex takeover wrangle, are demanding that four of the group's directors resign immediately to spare it further turmoil (See Commentary, this page).

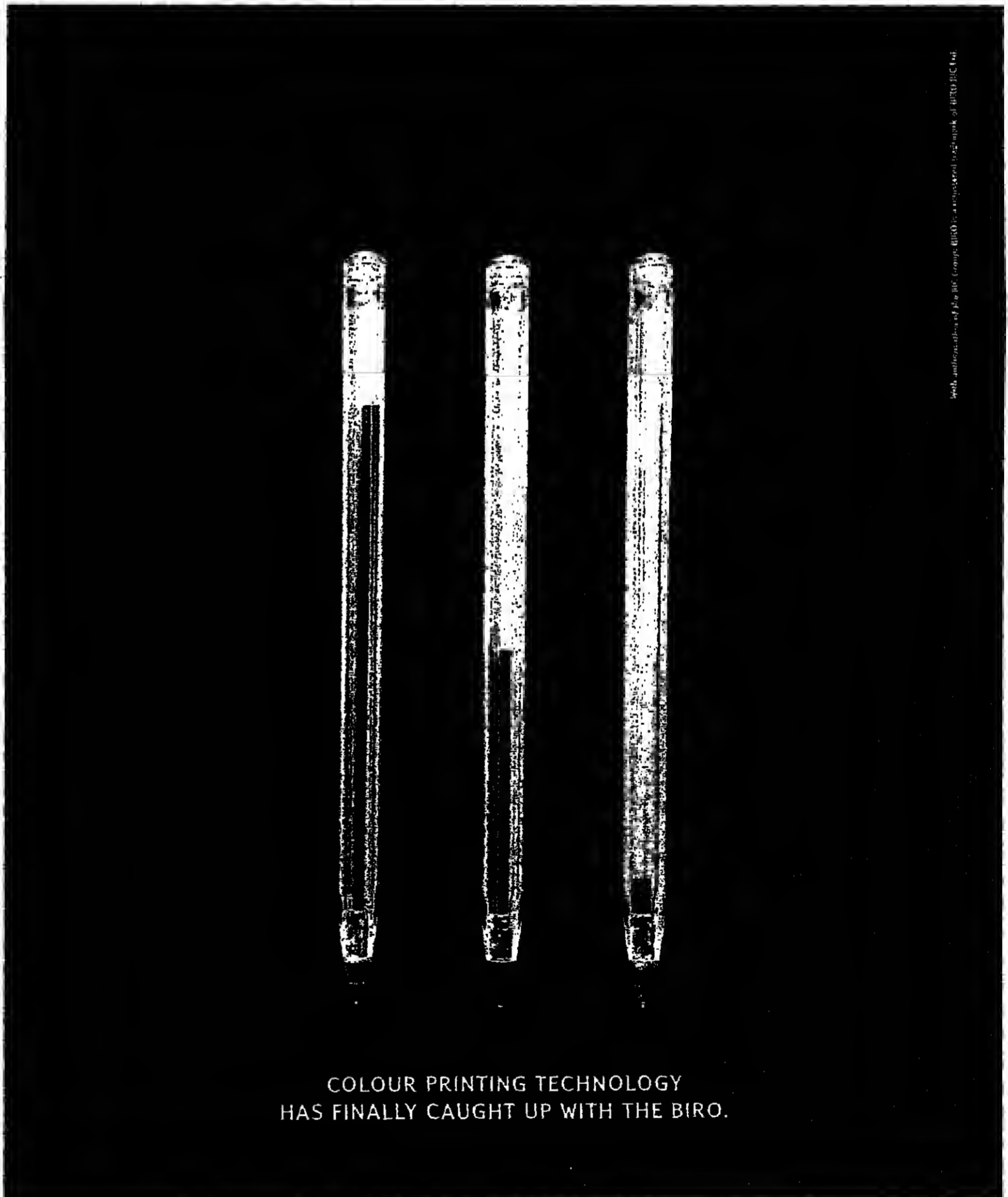
A spokesman for shareholders owning about 60 per cent of CSG was speaking after the Takeover Panel forced Michael Ashcroft, the wealthy businessman who is treasurer to the Conservative Party, to continue with his £250 million takeover offer.

The dissident shareholders have lost confidence in Ralph Hulbert, chairman, and other directors and want a new board to assess the state of CSG and the merits of the Ashcroft offer.

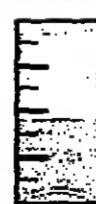
A shareholder meeting to enforce the management changes will not take place until May 4. The spokesman said: "The board should in all conscience resign forthwith because Ashcroft has to go on with his bid. We need to be advised by a new board."

Mr Ashcroft's offer was conditional on there being no changes to CSG's board, but the Panel has ruled this is not a sufficiently important issue to allow him to withdraw his bid. New Carlisle, his bid vehicle, is expected to make an offer revised in such a way that will make it almost certain to fail.

Rea Brothers, New Carlisle's adviser, has already sought fresh discussions with Investec Henderson Crosthwaite, adviser to CSG.



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Simmering trade war gets to the beef

You could not wish trade sanctions on a better chap. This week, America finally and legally imposed price-doubling tariffs on Bernard Arnault's Louis Vuitton handbags and the Gucci bags he is so determined to add to his collection. Even crocodiles will not shed tears.

The Border cashmere industry will not, after all, be sacrificed to a dispute over the EU's failure to import quite enough bananas from the successors of United Fruit. Sentiment and politics doubtless played a part. Mostly it was because the World Trade Organisation slashed the value of goods on which the US had pre-emptively imposed import bonds.

Let anyone think that a two-way special relationship still exists. £14 million in UK exports of lead acid batteries, £7 million of bath preparations, £2 million of lithographs and smaller exports ranging from tea-makers to printed cotton bed linen are being hit by heavy US trade armoury. Britons' livelihoods will be lost while EU negotiators try to patch up a deal

that is acceptable to American trade negotiators at the expense of Caribbean islanders and poor West African peasants.

One way or another, US banana multinationals will take over their business. Martin Bangemann, free to speak his mind as outgoing EU Industry Commissioner, dismissed the EU case in what Reuters called "language that may be offensive to some readers". The pass had been sold in past trade negotiations. Under WTO rules the US was right. That does not mean it had to pick over those rules.

To satisfy open-walletted domestic political friends, America is prepared to impose punitive economic sanctions on the families of those with whom it is fighting wing-tip to wing-tip in the Balkans in common cause. Collateral damage will be done to innocent jobs, companies, investors and communities

that have nothing to do with the banana rules. Even Serbia, Iraq, Iran and Libya have not imposed punitive economic sanctions on us in the past 25 years — if only because they would be ineffective. Neither the Foreign Office nor the DTI have acted to stop this happening, let alone to seek redress for companies on the original list that were wrongly penalised.

The trade game is hard. We had better get used to playing it as ruthlessly as the EU's farm interests have long done and as the US is now prepared to do. We are likely to see how hard in the five times bigger row over American beef.

The WTO has already ruled that there is no scientific evidence to justify the EU ban on imports of beef grown with hormones. US sanctions are set to hit \$900 million of exports, from Essex raspberry jam to motorcycles, if the EU does not



GRAHAM SEALJEANT

comply by the WTO's May 13 deadline. Instead, the EU has just found hormones in the non-hormone beef we do allow in, the European Commission has called for a ban from June and claims that a health study will not be ready until the year end.

Expect war. But why? It is not as if trade war is a genuine part of the

WTO regime. Only America and the EU are powerful enough to mount an effective attack and only these two plus Japan can resist one. So WTO rules permitting retaliation effectively apply only to the big three, plus China when it is allowed to join. Others have little power to redress wrongs.

The same imbalance is apparent in choosing a replacement for Renato Ruggiero, head of the WTO, who is due to retire on April 30. Although members theoretically elect the director general, an instant tradition of consensus has been invented. This effectively gives a veto to the US, or to the EU if its members could agree.

If one country is to have a stranglehold on the world trade order, America is the best, even if it may not seem that way when Washington is bilaterally bullying Japan or putting South Korea in its place

via the IMF. An EU hegemony would be disastrous for free trade. But an imbalance of power is ultimately a recipe for conflict. It will grow more dangerous once China is a trade power.

After experience of the United Nations and its affiliates, America is rightly suspicious of repeating such nonsense in new bodies. If the WTO is to live up to its name, however, power and sanctions authorised under its regime should be more international.

If trade sanctions were exercised by the WTO rather than country to country, then smaller members would have a chance to protect their own interests. If fines were levied against governments, collateral damage to innocent businesses should also be avoided.

Key environmental and labour issues should also be dealt with via international WTO affiliates. That

would ease battles that mix crude arguments about child labour or wildlife with individual members' direct trade interests.

When various forums are summoned by America for the next round of trade reforms, these issues should be at the top of the agenda. The world's most important trading nation is running a \$200 billion trade deficit when economic logic suggests it should be running a current surplus.

For that reason alone, this is the time for cool negotiations to liberalise trade further. It would not go down well, for instance, if developing nations challenged the Jones Act, which protects US coastal shipping and the associated ship-building yards.

The access of China, already almost agreed, inevitably in detailed bilateral negotiations with America, will present a huge challenge to the system. The WTO regime needs to be put on a better footing if that challenge is not to coincide with conflicts between the two most powerful blocs that could knock out the foundations of open trade.

Wall Street's legal eagles swoop on the Square Mile

Paul Armstrong
on why top commercial lawyers are crossing the Atlantic

Did you hear the one about the London lawyer who prepared a will for an elderly female client? He charged her £200, but she accidentally paid him £500. This put the lawyer in an obvious moral dilemma. Should he tell his partners about the extra fee?

London lawyers have long been the butt of jokes among their fellow professional workers, but it seems that now even their US counterparts are starting to have a chuckle at the expense of some of them.

Top-tier Wall Street firms are starting to make themselves at home in the Square Mile, where the globalisation of legal services is at its most advanced. And while they may be yet to win a substantial slice of the market, there are growing fears about the impact they could have over the next five years.

"I think what people are worried about is not what the US firms are today but what happens next," says Maurice Allen, who heads the London office of US firm Weil, Gotshal & Manges. "It is a lot harder than we thought it would be, but the clever people realise that there is a strategic battle going on and that maybe the US people will get ahead of the English in that battle."

Much of the trend is being driven by the leading investment banks, which are seeking to exploit their new-found ability to structure deals under the law of almost any country. It just happens that, in the vast majority of cases, they opt for the British or US legal systems, depending on which is the most accommodating.

This has prompted many New York firms to hang up their shingle in London in the hope of winning business that would have otherwise left the Street. There is still a handful



The cast of the television show LA Law. Their ilk are already making a mark on the City

of US firms, such as Sullivan & Cromwell, for which US legal advice still accounts for the vast bulk of the work done in their London offices. But, increasingly, US firms operating in London have lawyers working in both jurisdictions.

Members of the legal fraternity say the traffic is flowing both ways as London firms chase business from British investment banks wanting to construct deals under US law.

The push to expand law practices across the Atlantic has reached new heights with Clifford Chance, the British firm, in merger talks with Rog-

er Wells, a medium-sized New York firm. Industry observers say it is only time before the top line firms attempt transatlantic mergers. But they believe that such industry rationalisation, which will also involve mergers of London-based firms, could still be several years away.

Alan Hodgart, a director of Hodgart Consulting, a leading management adviser to European law firms, said the investment banks stumbled across the advantages of structuring deals in the jurisdiction of their choice early this decade. But he said the practice has been

adopted with increasing enthusiasm in the past five years.

"They worked out that if you are buying a business with offices in ten countries you can do the whole transaction under British or US law and just have lawyers on the ground in each place to clear up the local issues," Mr Hodgart said. "A lot of the second-tier firms realised they would lose work if they didn't do the same so there is a real market share race going on there as a consequence of these changes at the top."

He said some second-tier US legal firms that specialised

in industries such as insurance had also been lured to London in the hope of taking market share from the local practitioners. Many of these firms had found the going tough. "You can justify moving abroad for many reasons but, at the end of the day, there has to be something that adds value for the client," Mr Hodgart said.

Figures published recently by *Commercial Lawyer*, the legal industry journal, showed that there were five US law firms operating in Europe with 100 or more lawyers each. A further six had more than 50. However, while these statistics highlight the potential for US firms to put pressure on their UK competitors, they are still a long way from the 1,000 or so lawyers employed by Clifford Chance.

Stephen Fiamma, who is the partner in charge at the London office of the US firm Jones Day Reavis & Pogue, says American companies are making it increasingly clear that they want to deal with only one law firm, regardless of where an acquisition is located.

But Mr Fiamma also gave warning that the London legal market was highly competitive and did not offer US firms an easy profit boost.

"At this point in the cycle any lawyer can do well if they are reasonably competent," he says. "The real test will be in the next downturn, when we will see how many have the staying power."

Mr Fiamma said some US firms had bought their way into the UK market by offering huge pay rises to leading lawyers from London firms. But he said many partners in these firms would be unwilling to sustain the tough times if they felt the money was coming out of their pocket.

"We have to compete with English lawyers. It is not like going into a market where the local lawyers can not get their shoe laces untied. This is also a very high overhead market compared with New York."

Mr Fiamma said some US firms could be risking a repeat of the mistakes they made in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when lawyers swarmed to London in the hope of capitalising on the start-up of the Common Market.

Spam leaves nasty taste for Net users

The problem of junk e-mail — known bizarrely in the computer industry as "spam" — is escalating. This is not only an irritation to computer users, but also a potential threat to all companies conducting business on the Internet.

The subject of spam has hit the headlines twice this week. The subject first came up on Monday when Virgin Net, the Internet access provider, said that it had become the first British company to take legal action against a so-called "spammer". The second came when Graham Watson, the Liberal Democrat MEP for Somerset and North Devon, delivered a petition to the European Parliament from 24,000 Internet users fed up with receiving junk e-mails.

Spam usually involves lone businessmen or start-up companies sending millions of unsolicited e-mails in one go. Typically the e-mails contain the kind of dubious offers more commonly found in the small ads section of *Private Eye* magazine. Most recently, e-mail users have been offered the chance to invest in fictitious Internet companies.

The problem of spam has come about partly because it is so easy to get hold of e-mail addresses. Spammers can obtain addresses either using a software package or by purchasing e-mail addresses from customer research companies.

The biggest problem with spam is that it clogs up the computer systems used by large corporations and Internet access companies, often causing them temporarily to shut down.

So far, the only way for com-



panies to tackle the problem is to use so-called "filtration software", which can detect unsolicited e-mails and delete them before they enter their networks. However, such software rarely eliminates the problem, and spammers tend to be one step ahead of technology.

BiblioTech, another British Internet company, has also launched legal action against a spammer. The company, which is a rival to Microsoft's Hotmail and provides free e-mail addresses to 100,000 subscribers throughout Europe, was subject to a massive bulk e-mail campaign by an American businessman selling print supplies, such as ink cartridges for computer printers.

Chris Verdin, the company's finance director, argues that anyone who provides Internet access suffers as a result of junk e-mail. "The worst thing is that the recipient pays for it," he says. "Because you have to spend time online to download it."

SOFTWARE that allows companies to manage the design, manufacture and maintenance of products has been launched this week by SAP, the German software group.

CHRIS AYRES

B2 bombs

I HEAR the last rites are being read at Barclays for the unloved B2 savings account. This is because the new Barclays symbol — the eagle within a kind of badge that resembles nothing so much as one of those plastic snowstorm toys, the Vauxhall logo, or possibly a "boy in a bubble" — will be used for every part of the company, with the probable exception of the Barclays card.

B2, launched by Martin Taylor last May, will therefore join that sector of the banking graveyard haunted by the spirit of Vector, Orchard and Meridian — shortly to be joined, we can only hope, by the British Gas goldfish.

When B2 was launched, I said it wouldn't last. I was right. Mind you, I thought that Taylor would stick around.

BEFORE Bank of Scotland gets too cocky about yesterday's results, I have been contacted by a reader who says he has just received a piece of junk mail from its credit card department headed: "Win a trip to the Uefa Champions League final in Barcelona."

To go into the prize draw, all he has to do is answer one question. Which goes as follows: "Which city is the 1999 Uefa Champions League final being held in?"

With the eight-hour time difference we can now bill up on a slide as head of clinical

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studies at Wilex, a German cancer therapy company.

The usually talkative Millar is not saying much, except to confirm that he is working as a consultant for Wilex and for Olaf Wilhelm, its chief executive.

In between legal skirmishes with his former employer, I assume, Millar says: "Wilex is a very interesting company and I'm flattered to be on board. It's a pity I can't get any work in this country."

Fresh start

ONLY days after the temporary monk, Jim O'Donnell, gave up the paths of the Lord to return to Mammorn, I learn of another mid-life crisis in the City. Richard Broadbent, joint

head of corporate finance at Schroders, is dropping out of the nine-to-five.

Broadbent — 46 and confusingly, no relation to his former boss Adam — surprised everyone when he resigned from the bank yesterday.

"He wants to do something else with his life," Win Bischoff, Schroders' chairman, tells me. "He is going to take some time off and decide what he is going to do. He assures me he is not going to a competitor."

O'Donnell, who was at HSBC, spent just 18 months as a monk before kicking the habit and joining Salomon Smith Barney. I would not bet against Broadbent's eventual return either.

PURA FOODS, producer of food and cooking oils, yesterday slapped a writ on the mighty Shell organisation, producer of pious documents on corporate ethics, alleging trademark infringement and passing off.

The inedible oil company had launched its own Pura, a new make of diesel oil, earlier this year. The edible Pura alleges "tremendous embarrassment and confusion" which has necessitated the hiring of City solicitor Eversheds. The complaint is that its edible oil and Shell's diesel are both being sold under the same name. You mean there's a difference?

Polling boot

A RARE glimpse into the intricacies of political life from Lord, formerly Dr David, Owen, at the Reform Club for the launch of the first pamphlet from his New Europe pressure group.

The talk came around to the next election, and Owen said politicians were disinclined to trust the opinion polls. "Mrs Thatcher packed her bags in '83 and '87," he claimed. "I used to look up the vacancies in the British Medical Journal before every election."

MARTIN WALLER

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Lord Owen: scanned the situations vacant columns

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ACCOUNTANCY

Businesslike approach is vital on internal controls

Nigel Turnbull
on proposals
for the way
companies
oversee
their risks

At the start of this decade, there was little formal guidance on corporate governance beyond that contained in company law. Then came the Cadbury Report, the Rutterman guidance on internal financial control, the Greenbury Report on directors' remuneration and, most recently, the Combined Code of the Hampel Committee. This week, another set of proposals, this time on internal controls broadly defined, has landed on boardroom tables. So why are they needed?

In one sense, the answer is straightforward. When the combined code was published last summer, the Institute of Chartered Accountants agreed with the Stock Exchange that it would set up a working party to develop guidance to assist listed companies to implement the new requirements on internal control.

Principle D2 of the code calls on boards to "maintain a sound system of internal control to safeguard shareholders' investment and the company's assets", while a related code provision requires companies to review that system's effectiveness at least annually.

The underlying reason, of course, for the preparation of the guidance on internal control is that, as the wording of the principle highlights, it has a vital role to play in ensuring that a business is well run. That said, it complements, and is not a substitute for, entrepreneurship. In a market economy, profits are the reward for successful risk-taking and the role of internal control is to manage risk appropriately rather than to eliminate it. The nature of a



Nigel Turnbull says reviews of controls must be firmly embedded in companies' operations

group's principal risks will depend, for example, on the areas of the world in which it trades, on the industries in which it operates and on company-specific factors.

The working party has therefore sought to develop practical and robust guidance that groups can tailor to their individual circumstances. This is far better than imposing a one-size-fits-all set of detailed rules, though we recognise that it is not the easy option and is more challenging for directors and auditors. Moreover, the working party believes that the process for reviewing the internal control system should be firmly

embedded in the group's ongoing operations and not treated as an exercise just undertaken for regulatory purposes.

The board may wish to delegate aspects of its review of effectiveness to, say, its audit committee, but it must form its own opinion on the review's overall adequacy. It is proposed that the board, or a relevant committee, should regularly review reports on control issues, probably on a cyclical basis in respect of different parts of the business. Factors to be considered include the key risks in the section of the

business being reviewed and how they have been identified, evaluated and managed, the effectiveness of the related control system and whether weaknesses found are being remedied promptly.

In addition to the regular reviews, boards will need to undertake a specific annual review exercise ahead of the annual report being approved.

This should cover, for example, changes since the last review in the nature and extent of significant risks; the group's ability to respond effectively to change; the quality of management's ongoing monitoring of internal

control; the incidence and impact of major control weaknesses and the effectiveness of the year-end financial reporting process.

In groups in which no internal audit function exists, the board will be expected to consider the need for one annually; similarly, if it does have such a function, it should review its remit, authority, resources and scope of work once a year.

Turning to disclosures, the working party is seeking to promote the provision of meaningful high-level information while avoiding voluminous detail that does not provide an insight to the company's approach to internal control.

Listed companies will be required to confirm that there is an ongoing process for identifying, evaluating and managing the company's key risks, and that it is regularly reviewed by the board and accords with the guidance. As the guidance sets out very clearly the processes to be followed in maintaining a sound control system, this disclosure is at the same time both concise and powerful.

It is also proposed that companies should explain how the board reviewed the effectiveness of the review process and that when the board is unable to make either of these disclosures, it should explain what it is doing to rectify the situation. To enable listed companies to make necessary changes to come into line with the new guidance, a phased implementation over the current and next accounting periods is proposed.

I would urge all boards of listed companies, their auditors and the users of their annual reports to read the proposals in full and to submit their comments by June 14.

Nigel Turnbull is chairman of the Internal Control Working Party of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales and finance director of Rank Group.

Copies of the proposals are available on www.icaw.co.uk/internalcontrol.

Monet proves the case for a little dash of grey in the executive picture

IF ANYONE ever gets round to writing a history of business sponsorship of the arts, then the efforts of Ernst & Young will score highly on the success list. Their latest effort, the sponsorship of the Monet exhibition at the Royal Academy, came to an end last Sunday. It was the most popular art exhibition ever held in this country. Some 813,000 people saw it, and the Royal Academy took £3.9 million in ticket sales. And it was also a great critical, as well as popular, success.

However, for an "absolutely delighted" Ernst & Young, there were other figures to measure. More than 32,000 Ernst & Young employees and guests saw the exhibition, including more than 8,000 clients. This is the highest success figure. To have access to such a massive "must-see" show, and for it to be an art exhibition, at which it is the most natural thing in the world to chat beforehand or as you go around the pictures, scores highly over any other type of business sponsorship.

And Ernst & Young ran it well. It was slightly eerie to find that as you left at the end of an evening viewing you could see another tranche of guests emerging from dinner in the floors above and moving down to take over your place in front of the water-lily ponds. The organisation was phenomenal.

However, for the accounting world, there was another lesson to be learnt from the exhibition. And it is rather an ironic one. The exhibition consisted entirely of Monet's work from this century. It revealed the work of a highly motivated, energetic and hard-working artist. The earliest work dated from the point at which Monet was aged 60. The last work dated from the last year of his life, when he was 86. The partnership deeds of the large accountancy firms ban anyone from remaining a partner over the age of 60. At the point where Monet was starting to produce some of his finest work, any senior accountant is being turfed out of the firm and told that productive life is over. On the new global board of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, John Connolly, the UK senior partner, is the oldest member. He is 48. Indeed, it is unusual to find any partner over the age of 55 still in anything approaching full harness in an accounting firm these days.

This trend is beginning to cause anxiety, particularly in America. For some years, it has been obvious that the average age of chairman and chief executives is about a decade higher than that of the average partner who is providing their advice. In the UK, and particularly in America, the average age of corporate chiefs is moving upwards. The gap in both culture and experience is beginning to cause concern.



ROBERT BRUCE

Many factors are involved. This is the first generation that has had prosperity on such a scale that comparatively many people can afford to leave full-time work in their early fifties. The fashion is likely to change. The prospect of 30 years' leisure, however you fill it, will pall. There is a limit, however much you may relish the escape from phone, fax and laptops, to how many watercolours you can manage of the rolling Sussex farmland. Most people find the joys of retirement a bit of a mirage. In ten years' time, people will be craving to stay on and be productive, like Monet, until the day they drop.

There are also differences in style. The corporate world is far less pressured than that of professional service firms. Partners in law and accountancy firms work harder than their clients tend to in the corporate sector. So burn-out is a factor. So is the risk they run of working in a business where they take unlimited financial liability for anything going wrong. If you have done well, there must be an argument at 51 for saying: "Let's get out while the going is good".

Partners in audit work also face pressures with the quite recent introduction of the rule that only allows audit partners to stay in charge of a specific job for a fixed span of seven years. If you are going to have to give up your biggest client when you are within seven years of a mooted retirement date, you are likely to go at that point rather than stay.

"Once upon a time," a senior member of the profession said this week, "you could tell partners because they had grey hairs. Now they leave before they have got them." It is the old equation of knowledge and experience. For knowledge, you might prefer the doctor who is 45 and vigorously up to date. For experience, you might prefer someone of 60. Accounting firms argue differently. "At the age of 45 people have seen 20 years of the business," said one partner this week. "And they will still have seen two recessions."

However, the case for lengthening the career span is growing. In America, KPMG is looking to raise its retirement age. Firms will feel the pressure to encourage people to stay on. A proposal will go to the KPMG board in the UK on Monday about how the firm can keep the right people for the right reasons. The answer may well be to mix responsibilities later on so that partners can avoid exhaustion and maximise their value.

The irony of partners in professional firms marvelling at the productivity and imagination of an elderly Monet may not be lost after all.



The last day of Monet in the 20th Century, which took £3.9 million in ticket sales

Tale of wisdom without peer

RUMOUR has it that Colin Sharman, the indefatigable knacker of heads together in his quest to make KPMG a truly global firm, has been wondering whether there is not an easier way of making a living. As international chairman, his role has not been a bed of roses. Curmudgeonly Canadians leading him a merry dance

over the possibility of absconding to Arthur Andersen being but the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the problems of herding international partners all into the one organisation. So it comes as no surprise that Sharman has given some thought to imparting his business wisdom in a wider forum. It is said that he fancies a life

perage so that the nation can hear his thoughts more clearly from the House of Lords. Step forward the hopeful Lord Sharman of Telford Magna.

Serious stuff
AT LAST. The news we have been waiting for. The Accounting Standards Board (ASB), and its sister bodies, the Finan-

cial Reporting Council and the Financial Reporting Review Panel, have launched their websites. But they can only be described as disappointments. They are clear, fast and packed with information. But where is the fun? Why is there no league scoreboard showing how the favoured football club of the ASB chairman, Sir Dav-

id Tweedie, the penniless but entertaining Falkirk, is out-gunning the financially challenged cloggers of Patrick Thistle, the fancy of Ron Paterson of Ernst & Young. Tweedie's deadly technical oppo? Come to that, why is there not a page of Tweedie's famous jokes? It is all very well having an excellent technical summary of something such as FRS13, but accountants cannot live by bread alone.

Flying high

IT WAS a triumph for John Connolly at the great Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu global jamboree in London last week. Not only was he confirmed as new Deloitte & Touche UK senior partner and chief executive, but he was also made global managing partner for the assurance, accounting and advisory practices of the worldwide firm. That means he is in command of more than 60 per cent of the firm's international fees. Not bad for the Mancunian high-flyer known universally as "The Fat Controller" in his North Country days.

ROBERT BRUCE

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The world is waiting for your product. Food from Britain is waiting for your call.

The UK boasts some of the most accomplished food and drink producers in the world. Yet a surprisingly large number are still entirely dependent on the UK for their business. And it's not getting any easier, with the never-ending tussle over shelf-space and margins in our overcrowded island.

A case of too many eggs in one basket. But lack of familiarity with overseas markets, retailers, distribution logistics and, at the simplest level, language, can deter even the most aggressive of marketers. Where, then, can they turn for this essential help?

Food from Britain: Helping you to hit the ground running

Food from Britain is the UK's leading international food and drink marketing consultancy, with the objective of helping British food and drink producers develop new markets overseas. Ours is not a consultancy of fine talking theorems, but an intensely practical one. All our people are commercial professionals working out of their own offices in all the major European countries, North America and Japan, with detailed knowledge of their local markets. We can help you pinpoint opportunities, supply you with market data and make the key introductions to trade partners and buyers.



Fancy a bigger slice of the cake?

We can help you with trade shows, publicity and promotions. In a nutshell, we'll help you build your business abroad.

The world is your oyster...or tea bag...soup...cereal...

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to realise that the rest of the world represents a bigger potential market than the UK, a genuine opportunity both to grow sales and spread risk. In fact, the value of UK food and drink exports has doubled in the last decade and now stands at around £10 billion. Hardly surprising given the innovation, imagination and drive that characterises so many UK food and drink producers.

Just to quote from our own portfolio, we have helped UK companies sell breakfast cereal to the Spanish, preserves to the U.S., chilled soups to Belgium and France and drawing tea bags to the Japanese. In total, we are working with nearly 1000 companies.

But boil it all down and our value can be described in three short words: Knowledge. Know-how. Contacts.

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TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

1999 US Company					1999 US Company					1999 US Company					1999 US Company							
High	Low	Company	Price	% Chg	High	Low	Company	Price	% Chg	High	Low	Company	Price	% Chg	High	Low	Company	Price	% Chg			
712	712	GE	1104	-15.1	15.13	441	35	General Elec	39	-	757	757	Manu Values	61	41	355	235	Boeing	158	2.1		
420	420	General M	547.5	-75.2	13.8	267	452	Gen Motors	511.5	-1.3	728	728	757	757	Manu Values	61	41	355	235	Boeing	158	2.1
120	120	General M	547.5	-75.2	13.8	267	452	Gen Motors	511.5	-1.3	728	728	757	757	Manu Values	61	41	355	235	Boeing	158	2.1
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120	120	General M	547.5	-75.2	13.8	267	452	Gen Motors	511.5	-1.3	72											

1999	Low Company	Price of	High	Low Company	Price of	High
30	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
31	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
32	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
33	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
34	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
35	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
36	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
37	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
38	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
39	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
40	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
41	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
42	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
43	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
44	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
45	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
46	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
47	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
48	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
49	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
50	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
51	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
52	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
53	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
54	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
55	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
56	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
57	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
58	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
59	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
60	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
61	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
62	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
63	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
64	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
65	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
66	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
67	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
68	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
69	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
70	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
71	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
72	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
73	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
74	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
75	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
76	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
77	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
78	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
79	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
80	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
81	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
82	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
83	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
84	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
85	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
86	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
87	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
88	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
89	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
90	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
91	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
92	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
93	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
94	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
95	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
96	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115
97	Core Group	32	115	115	115	115

مَكَزًا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ



THEATRE
Ted Hughes's
Tales from Ovid
in Stratford
 PAGE 40

THE TIMES ARTS

MUSICALS
Backstage
antics in the
boyband zone
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NEW MOVIES: Depraved and disturbing it may be, but *8mm* holds a curious fascination for James Christopher

Bold Nic among the real devils

At once disconcerting and thoroughly entertaining, *8mm* tacksles the darkest area of film: the snuff movie, the killing of a human being for pornographic entertainment. Such depravity may only exist in our imaginations. But that's precisely why this film provokes such strong feelings. Critics have been fulminating about bad taste and moral bankruptcy since Joel Schumacher's film opened in America last month. But Schumacher's only crime is to take this primal depravity and process it in exactly the same way that Hollywood has been processing its atrocities for decades — by enclosing them in good old-fashioned thrillers.

It would be hard to invent a more moral private investigator than Nicolas Cage in this well-spoken Tom Wells. Cage is sharp, scrupulously polite and he visits clients in a suit and tie. He has manicured nails, a loyal wife, a young daughter and a steady income. He couldn't be more boringly normal. It's the most unassuming role Cage has ever played, and he is utterly magnetic in it. Summoned to a grand Pennsylvania mansion by the widow of a recently deceased tycoon, Cage is handed a reel of 8mm film in which a half-naked, terrified teenage girl is shown apparently being murdered by a man wearing a black leather mask. It's not Cage's usual beat but, sensitive to old money, he sets off to find out if the film is for real, and whether the girl, named Mary, is still alive.

On the surface, it's business as usual. Reputations have to be protected, discretions guaranteed and fees forthcoming. Peace of mind is what's at stake. But as Cage penetrates the neon underworld of the Los Angeles sex trade, his own peace of mind crumbles. The

8mm
 Odeon Leicester Square
 18, 123 mins
Nicolas Cage in thriller about snuff movies
Besieged
 Curzon Mayfair
 PG, 92 mins
Sumptuous romance
Message in a Bottle
 Warner Village
 West End
 12, 132 mins
Corked romance with Kevin Costner
Side Streets
 Plaza
 15, 131 mins
Depressing trawl through NY's innards
The Brylcreem Boys
 ABC Panton Street
 15, 107 mins
Corny Irish war movie
Out of the Present
 ABC Piccadilly
 U, 96 mins
Space documentary
Dance With Me
 Virgin Trocadero
 PG, 126 mins
Cuban toe-tapper
Misadventures of Margaret
 ABC Shaftesbury Ave
 15, 92 mins
Fine cast commits adultery



Straitlaced private eye Nicolas Cage gets a guided tour to the seamier side of life from Joaquin Phoenix in the frequently gripping thriller, *8mm*

evidence leads him on a Dante-esque quest into a dehumanising hell of pornographic dungeons. His guide is Joaquin Phoenix's leather-trousered shop assistant. With his Puckish face and endless drooliness, Phoenix provides a blast of di-

vine comedy. He reads Truman Capote novels behind mucky magazines and cheekily tortures Cage about how porn messes with your head. Cage's features duly droop; phone calls to his wife grow increasingly strained.

But, having led us so wittily into a heart of darkness, Schumacher's film then becomes intoxicated by sensation, lurching like a drunk from one dank warehouse to another. A cast of deliciously sleazy villains (James Gadjigi, Peter

Stormare and Chris Bauer) — pornographers all, with perverted minds, deranged egos and a wicked collection of evil-looking toys — pops up like old cartoons from the Batman serials. Schumacher recently murdered. The playful metaphors become hammy.

The moment Cage drops his distance to become a Hamlet-style vigilante is the moment the film's credibility starts imploding. His motives make crude sense, but a gripping moral thriller gives way to an action movie. The devious plot, too, throttles the deviant issues raised by the serial killer writer, Andrew Kevin Walker (who was responsible for *Seven*). That said, the flashy suspense never lets up. I'm probably on my own here, but I rather enjoyed it, warts and all, more wars.

Bernardo Bertolucci is no stranger to controversy, but his latest film, *Besieged*, is simply a gem. Taken from a short story by James Lasdun, the film charts the infatuation of a reclusive English pianist (David Thewlis) with his bewitching African cleaner (Thandie Newton). Newton, an impoverished medical student, earns her keep by scrubbing Thewlis's dilapidated palazzo in Rome. With his lopsided smile, huge nose and silly waggle of the head, Thewlis is the most nerdy romantic. Tight-lipped, middle-aged and lonely with it.

The first half hour is virtually wordless, but it's supremely eloquent. Newton maintains a formal distance: intensely vulnerable, effortlessly exotic. Her nightmare flashbacks to Africa reveal a husband who has been incarcerated as a political prisoner. An angry outburst on the marble spiral stairs that link, yet separate, Thewlis and Newton, results in the most subtle of blackmail. To prove his love, Thewlis quietly sells all he possesses to ransom her husband. It's the most quixotic of gestures, the most selfless of gambles. The cinematography is exquisite and the culture clash of music is as emblematic as you want it to be. Bertolucci has entered his vintage years. Don't miss out.

Milkmen from Land's End to John O'Groats will rue the day Luis Mandoki's *Message in a Bottle* was released in Britain. When Robin Wright

Penn's nosy journalist discovers said bottle washed up on the beach, she uncorks a tear-jerking romance that sweeps her into the hairy arms of Kevin Costner's brooding boat-builder, Garret Blake. This is a low-salt, high-spend love story, rather more enamoured of the Maine coastline than it is of its stars.

Costner's widowed sceptic and Penn's supernaturally preserved journalist shift around each other like a couple of gawky adolescents. He is Heathcliffe in all but name; she is rather more successful as a hot water bottle than a therapist. Lost? Marooned more like. The best that can be said is that the story bobs along like the bottle, clunking into Paul Newman's recovering alcoholic who fiddles with boat engines and cuts up rough in the local diner. Costner makes smalltalk as enjoyable as breaking boulders.

Penn oozes and gushes like the tide. The chunky knitwear speaks volumes. Terence Ryan's *The Brylcreem Boys* is the most unbelievable piece of baloney. Here, under the twinkling eye of Gabriel Byrne's camp commander and the ludicrous

sowd of Joe McGann's camp bastard, spilling Allied troops and charmless German soldiers are interned together to underline Ireland's strict neutrality during the Second World War. Although separated by a barbed wire fence, the enemies enjoy the same privileges: day passes to the local races, shindigs in the local pub and for two of them — Bill Campbell's idealistic Canadian fighter pilot and Angus MacFadyen's plump, scar-faced German ace — a fight for the hand of Jean Butler's Riverdance farm-lass.

With mad ambition the film sets itself up as a tragic romance. The reality is *Dad's Army*, *The Great Escape* and the *Carry On* films pinned together with cod-Nazi accents, dusty stereotypes and clichés that make your toes curl in delighted disbelief. It's so awful it's almost magnificent.

Tony Gerber's *Side Streets* spends 24 hours exploring the crashed dreams of losers in New York's ethnic melting pot and, boy, does it dribble. Art Malik's Indian taxi driver never gets paid by any of his fares. His tiny house has been taken over by his enormously fat brother, an ageing Bolly-

wood idol (Shashi Kapoor). His harassed wife is a bowl of peanuts away from murdering the glamorous has-been. Valeria Golino's dress designer has no customers, and an eviction order. David Vadim's Romanian butcher boy gets locked in a freezer. John Ortiz's seedy Puerto Rican is mugged trying to impress his new teenage lover.

Gerber grimly stitches these non-stories into an excuse to avoid New York's back streets altogether. The acting is stringently unsympathetic, the film even more so. Ugh.

What kind of people aspire to manning a tin can in space designed by *Blue Peter* presenters? The answer can be found in Andrei Ujica's ultimate fly-on-the-wall documentary, *Out of the Present*. In 1991-92 two brave and uncomplicated Russian cosmonauts, Anatoli Arzbarsky and Sergei Krikalyov, spent months rattling around the Mir space station. On the one hand it's the Russian equivalent of *The Right Stuff*. On the other it's a serious account of endurance.

The calculated thrill is that the men who edited this video diary make the men who lived it entirely blind to the ironies of their mission. The astronauts are willing, childish participants. They listen to pop music, eat disgusting bags of food and frolic in a vacuum as if they were in a youth hostel for eggheads. The message is simple: space is utterly meaningless without the Earth, and what goes on on Earth is utterly meaningless in space.

Dance With Me is a kitsch feast for *Come Dancing* enthusiasts with a little Latin heartache on the side. A chunky Cuban hunk, Rafael (the Latin American music star, Chayanne), washes mirrors in a dilapidated Texas dance studio for a motley band of hoofers: sexy Vanessa L. Williams, miscast Joan Plowright, raddled Kris Kristofferson (need we go on?). With a grin as wide as Havana, Chayanne sows Cuban magic in the hearts of these misfits. The sentiment is as choreographed as the salsa. It goes on for ever.

Brian Skeet's movie, *Misadventures of Margaret*, throws a classy young cast into the most dismal sex-obsessed pot-boiler. An impossibly chic couple, Parker Posey and Jeremy Northam, flirt with adultery after seven years of married bliss. She takes off to France to write a bodice-ripping sex fantasy. He quotes Walt Whitman to a busty student groupie in New York. Their friends, Elizabeth McGovern and Brooke Shields, polish their epithets on their crumbling marriage. It desperately aspires to be grown-up but the veneer of sophistication extends only to Posey's fabulous eyebrows.

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 revival

Heading



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Ready for your revival, Ms Bisset?

When Jacqueline Bisset sensed that the director Marshall Herskovitz couldn't decide whether to give her a key role in his period drama *The Honest Courtesan*, she decided to convince him. At 54, Bisset's track record — *The Deep*, *The Thief Who Came to Dinner*, *Bullitt*, *Rich and Famous* and François Truffaut's *Day for Night* among more than 50 films — should speak for itself. But the British actress, who has lived in California since the late 1960s, is a realist when confronted with the Hollywood system she knows so well.

"They were thinking of me for *The Honest Courtesan* and I had a meeting with the director and I could tell they were looking at other people, too," says Bisset. "I sensed that they were looking for a bigger name, someone who is more current, someone from a hot TV series, whatever. And I was getting very frustrated by the whole thing."

"So I said to myself: 'I'm perfectly good for this role and I know that I can be really great in this part. I can't think of anyone else who could do it better.' So I put together a piece of film to show him. I did a monologue, related to the character; I dressed myself up so I wouldn't look contemporary. I put together something that looked period-ish; I put a piece of string around my forehead, I found a blouse and a corset and I played dress-up. I sent him the film and it worked. I got the part."

Bisset may be a realist but she forces herself to be an optimist, too. While other actresses of a certain age bemoan their lot and rightly point out that decent roles for older women are as rare as snowflakes in Santa Monica, she has her own, very positive, mantra.

"There is all this talk that beyond a certain age it is difficult for actresses, but I refuse to accept that. I mean, I just hate that phrase 'a certain age' and it annoys me when in every interview you read everyone is whining about this, that and the other."

"I make myself be positive. I say 'OK, you are bloody lucky to be working. Why are you working? Because you have a good attitude. Get rid of the rubbish and remember there are thousands of people who would love to have this job and get on and make the best of it. It will be terrific. And it usually is.'"

In recent years, after a lean spell during her forties, things have cer-

What becomes a legend most? In the case of Jacqueline Bisset, not being too proud to audition. **Martyn Palmer reports**

tainly been terrific for Bisset's career. Since making *The Honest Courtesan* almost two years ago — its release was delayed because of distribution problems — she has completed six more films, including two for TV, back to back.

"I've worked in France, Australia and Czechoslovakia, as well as the States. It's been very positive. I have energy and I want to work with the people I find interesting and on worthwhile projects. I don't need to do enormous parts, I was never attracted to them, but I do like to work."

In *The Honest Courtesan* she was able to find an outlet for some of that hard-edged realism in the role of Paola Franco, a mother who knows that her beautiful daughter Veronica (Catherine McCormack) will never be allowed to marry the handsome young aristocrat (Rufus Sewell) she has fallen in love with because of her lowly social standing.

Instead, she reveals to Veronica that she was once a courtesan, a beautiful escort who provided sexual favours for the richest and most powerful men in 16th-century Venice, and she encourages her daughter to follow the same path. Bisset was intrigued by the subject-matter — a mother basically pimping for her daughter — and feels that Paola is trying to help her child in the most practical way.

"I like period pieces and I hadn't done anything from this time before," she says. "And the subject did fascinate me, the whole business of the courtesans and the relationship between the mother and daughter."

"I believe that it is important that people who have children should pass on what they know and that's what Paola is doing. Paola knows that her daughter has to face reality. She can become a nun or she can become a courtesan."

Bisset believes it is a theme that is still relevant today. Born into an upper middle-class family in rural Berkshire, Bisset remembers that her own parents — her mother was a lawyer before marrying her late

father, a GP — were not from a generation about to pass on tips about sex and men, although they did give her many positive values to take into the world.

"I was given a great deal by my family in terms of education but I wasn't given anything practical like this. God, it would have been amazing to have known stuff about men instead of struggling and not having a clue and frequently feeling racked with guilt about things. Personally, I was in between two very different generations: my parents came from a generation where discipline was prevalent and then I was growing up in the Sixties which was the exact opposite."

"And I feel that everything that I was taught at school is now irrelevant: pounds, shillings and pence, miles and yards, things like that, have all gone. What remains strong in me is what my parents taught me: my manners, my sense of the world through them, through reading the books around the house, rather than anything I learnt in a history lesson."

After leaving school, Bisset worked, briefly, as a model and then won a small role in *The Knack* directed by Richard Lester, a knock-about comedy set in swinging Sixties London. She was spotted by Roman Polanski who cast her in his black comedy *Cul de Sac* and, in the same year, she made *Day for Night* with Truffaut. Soon Hollywood was beckoning.

Once named as the most beautiful woman in the world, Bisset is still striking. There are a few lines around these deep, sea-green eyes, but her body is in peak condition thanks to a disciplined routine of diet and exercise and, she says, that positive outlook on life.

"I think I do have a healthy attitude. I know when I don't work I sometimes get morbid but I think most actors are like that. But what I'm happy about is that I'm not freaking out about getting older."

"I mean I come to stay at a nice

hotel and I see the strawberry jam, the whipped cream and the scones, or whatever, and I can't resist — and I don't want to resist — but I know that I will have to pay. But I get on that damned treadmill and I sweat and then I feel like taking on the world. I do that five times a week and it gives me that bit of an edge and, occasionally, allows me to eat some of the things I wouldn't be able to eat if I didn't do it."

She has never married but there have been several well-publicised love affairs, notably with the Russian baller dancer Alexander Godunov, who died following an alcoholic binge shortly after they split up. For the past five years she has been living with Ermin Boztepe, a Turkish-born martial arts expert.

She arrived in Hollywood at the age of 23 and was planning to stay for just three weeks. Although she makes frequent trips back to London to see her mother, she has lived in California ever since. "I had no intention of staying," she says. "I was going to be there for three weeks and then come home. Then I fell in love with someone and that was it. And, of course, there were things that I really liked about being there: the light, for instance, gave me a great sense of energy after growing up in a dark house in cold and rainy England. And I wanted to move away from the traditional. I wanted to stop being an introvert."

At that time, cinema was entering a highly creative period. The new breed of directors — Coppola, Lucas, Polanski, Scorsese — were breaking through. "I didn't know anything about them," she laughs. "I didn't know a thing about anybody. I was busy learning how to be a woman. But it was a good time for me. When you leave a place like London and go to a place like California was then, not nearly so sophisticated, you have to work much harder on yourself."

"But if you have a lively mind you have to do it yourself. Whereas if you stay in a place like London, where it's all there, you could turn into a sponge. You could just become one of those women who just go to good restaurants, swan around and go to parties and wake up having lost your looks and not knowing a damn thing. I never wanted that..."

● *The Honest Courtesan* opens in Britain on April 30



Jacqueline Bisset: "What I am most happy about is that I'm not freaking out about getting older"

Heading for Hollywood



From Tufnell Park to LA: composer Simon Boswell

Next month sees the opening of yet another Shakespeare movie, this time getting the full Hollywood treatment with Michelle Pfeiffer and Kevin Kline. But the music for *Midsummer Night's Dream* will be anything but American: the composer is an Englishman who has become one of the most sought-after composers in cinema.

Simon Boswell's credits include *Shallow Grave* and *This Year's Love* and he has just started his next major project, co-writing the score with Elton John on *Women Talking Dirty*, the first film emerging from the rock star's movie company, Rocket Pictures. John called Boswell at his studio in Tufnell Park asking him to fly

Composer
Simon Boswell is making his name in movies, says Paul Nathanson

out to Los Angeles to help to create something "modern and radical" for the drama starring Helena Bonham Carter. Tim Roth and Ewan McGregor have both chosen Boswell, who also wrote the music for the BBC drama *The Lakes* for which he was nominated for a BAFTA, to write the music for their first movies as directors — *The War Zone* and *Tube*

Tales, due later this year. Michael Hoffman, *Midsummer's* director, asked for something "with wit and beauty and mystery and magic and yearning and strangeness and romance and intelligence and sophistication and simplicity and sensibility and burnout". Boswell obliged by translating this into medieval music and Persian rhythms used on ancient Roman instruments.

Roth's remit was completely different for his raw study of incest: *The War Zone's* music was cut back to the minimum. "We were determined not to sensationalise as we wanted to avoid being sentimental and leading people's emotions," says Boswell. "It was about repressing emotion rather than amplifying it."

Boswell's initiation into movie music was bizarre. While in Rome playing in a rock band in the mid-1980s, he met the art house horror film director Dario Argento at a party. Argento had seen him perform and asked him to do the music for *Creepers*, which he was then shooting. In the studio the next day Boswell was horrified to find that the scene he was given to score depicted a decapitation. He composed the musical equivalent of nails scratching a blackboard — violin harmonics accompanied by a plucked string of an electric guitar. The director declared the music "beautiful".

Boswell, a friendly 45-year-old, is neither a movie buff nor did he train as a composer. In fact he read English at Cambridge, which he feels was more useful to his present job. "Much of the work is about understanding scripts and the undercurrents, symbolism and imagery," he says. "You need to understand what the director is suggesting and it's all about communication and interpretation. You can nursemaid people through a film thematically. For example, watch a horror movie without music and it's not frightening, though it may be gruesome. But add the music and you add tension."

"Today film music has reached a very bad point where so much underlines everything and treats the audience like idiots. If you notice the music in a film the composer isn't doing his job."

■ **VELVET GOLDMINE**
Film Four/VCI, 15, 1998
WITH Seventies British glam-rock as the subject, you expect exciting if bloated music, androgynous caperings, and visual dazzlements galore. American indie director Todd Haynes gives us all this, though the needlessly complicated script makes it hard to get pulled in emotionally. Jonathan Rhys Meyers plays the central figure, a Bowie-esque performer called Brian Slade whose career shrinks to vanishing point. But it's Ewan McGregor, as an audacious American rock star nearly obliterated by drugs, who performs with enough force to break through the frenzy. Toni Collette also impresses as Slade's wife. A rental release.

■ **MARY, MUNGO AND MIDGE**
Kult Kids, U, 1999
A NEW video label devoted to cult children's TV from the day before yesterday gets off to an eye-popping, joyful start with three 15-minute adventures from the short-lived animation series drawn by John Ryan, creator of *Captain Pugwash*. Mary is human, Mungo's her dog, and Midge is a mouse. They live on a tower block's eighth floor in a world that now looks as bright and Pop-Arty as a Patrick Caulfield painting. Great fun.

■ **ODIPUS REX**
Tartan, 15, 1997
NOT among the most persuasive films of its director Pier Paolo Pasolini, though his forthright, visceral approach to Sophocles' tragedy brings assorted pleasures and jolts. The bulk is strikingly filmed against the Moroccan desert, with Franco Citti groping towards his destiny, hands over his eyes. A modern epilogue unfolds in Bologna. As usual Pasolini tries a difficult balancing act, juggling ancient myth with modern relevance. Silvano Manganaro's forceful contribution as Jocasta helps.

■ **A PERFECT MURDER**
Warner, 15, 1998
YOU can rent this remake of *Dial M for Murder* on video, or buy or rent on DVD. The latter format is preferable, partly because the extra features (two audio commentaries; an alternate ending) help to turn an otherwise mundane affair into something mildly interesting. Michael Douglas is the commodities trader who invites his wife's bohemian lover (Viggo Mortensen) to execute the

Glam acting

perfect murder. Gwyneth Paltrow swans around as the wife in peril. Alas, none of the characters engages our sympathies, although the technicians' commentary is interesting.

■ **THANK GOD HE MET LIZZIE**
Fox Pathé, 12, 1997
YOU'D have thought Cate Blanchett's presence in this thin but likeable Australian

comedy would have pushed it out into the cinemas here. Instead, it stays on video. The star of *Elizabeth* plays Lizzie (who else?); and the general celebrations on her chic wedding day get shaken up by the groom's worrying memories of an earlier, jollier relationship with working-class Jenny (Frances O'Connor). A rental release.

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■ OPERA

Genesis of Paul Bunyan

Britten's duet with a poet

As the Royal Opera revives Benjamin Britten's *Paul Bunyan*, Mike Ashman looks back at the stormy friendship with W.H. Auden that sparked the work

A "most surprising day", wrote the 22-year-old Benjamin Britten in his diary towards the end of April 1935. "I am booked to do the music to a film on the new Jubilee Stamp."

A keen cinephile who enjoyed both Walt Disney and Hitchcock, Britten took naturally to the tight working disciplines of film music, and his new employer, the GPO documentary film unit, soon offered a second project. Britten was driven to Malvern to meet the contemporary writer for *Coal: Face*, a 28-year-old school master and poet called Wystan Auden. The composer thought him "the most amazing man, a very brilliant and attractive personality". Auden found Britten "extremely young" but, when he heard Britten's setting of his lyrics, was fired by "his extraordinary musical sensitivity in relation to the English language".

The meeting initiated a close professional and personal relationship — significant to Auden, vital to Britten — but one that would last barely seven years. They collaborated on *Night Mail*, where Britten accompanied Auden's galloping onomatopoeic verse ("This is the night mail crossing the border/Bringing the cheque and the postal order") with music employing "compressed steam, sandpaper and miniature rails". Then they parodied the whole documentary genre in *The Way To The Sea*, a mock epic treatment of Southern Railway's new express to Brighton.

Britten also provided the music (including a terrific

blues) for two of the plays Auden wrote together with Christopher Isherwood for the left-wing Group Theatre. There were experimental radio documentaries and a big concert work, *Our Hunting Fathers*, which used man's treatment of the animal kingdom to symbolise the worsening political situation in 1930s Europe. In the audience sat Frank Bridge, Vaughan Williams and Britten's much loved mother, all interested, critical and slightly shocked.

Auden provided Britten with verse for cabaret songs and more serious statements. Britten actually set to music two poems almost certainly written to encourage him to be more open about his emotional and sexual feelings. "We were extraordinarily interfering in this respect," remembered Isherwood; Auden (in a mock will) even penned the lines "for my friend Benjamin Britten, composer, I beg that fortune send him soon a passionate affair".

Fortune was soon to send both men a passionate affair — and a long journey. Auden was an inveterate traveller in search of political and intellectual action. He moved to New York in January 1936 and met the young student Chester Kallman ("Mr Right has come into my life"). That summer Britten, in part following Auden's lead, reached New York with Peter Pears.

Although always aware of music, Auden had been brought up "to think that opera was impossible". But Kallman loved opera and made a thorough convert out of his new friend. The timing was

good. Britten was on hand and was told by his publishers that opportunities were rife in New York for an operetta that could be performed by high schools.

If the course of true love now ran relatively smooth for the two expatriate collaborators, that of their first opera did not. Auden was to settle for its subject on Paul Bunyan, the mythological giant American logger. The idea may have started during what the poet called his "honeymoon" holiday with Kallman — spent partly "in a log cabin with the most wonderful view over towards the mountains of Colorado, our horizon is about 300 miles long. It's very pioneer and you would laugh to see me rising at dawn to chop wood and draw water..."

So the legend of Bunyan seemed a perfect "matter of America" theme. The leading Auden scholar Edward Mendelson notes that John Dryden (much admired by Auden) had written a *King Arthur* for Purcell, "the first and still the only libretto written by a major English poet for a major English composer". Auden would write *Paul Bunyan* for Britten, and it "would be second".

Britten created a score whose sheer range of expression (and instrumentation) put to good use almost every one of the diverse compositional tasks he had tackled with Auden in the 1930s. Blues, musical "numbers", filmic underscoring, grand operatic parody and shades of Kurt Weill and Alban Berg helped an entertaining "choral operetta" to carry Auden's weightier sub-

ARTS

Lumberjack song: a scene from the Royal Opera's staging of *Paul Bunyan*, the opera conceived by Britten and Auden during their time in America

text of "How to live well in a country that the pioneers have made it possible to live in."

The eventual (and essentially amateur) premiere was at Columbia University in May 1941, and less than successful. "Auden's characters," comments Mendelson, "were American in the same way that the characters in *The Mikado* are Japanese, and American critics who were not bored were offended." But the work's first public already seemed to enjoy the hybrid form — more

a play with extended musical numbers than pure operetta — that worried the "experts" because they could not precisely tag it. An increasing number of revivals since Britten (slightly) reworked the score in 1973 has confirmed that popular impression.

For the Britten-Auden relationship, however, *Bunyan* was the beginning of an end. On Peter Pears's prompting, composer and tenor left the Bohemian menage in Brooklyn where their flatmates (during

the run-up to *Bunyan*'s premiere) had included Auden, the novelist Carson McCullers, the writer/composer Paul Bowles and the writer/strip-typer Gypsy Rose Lee. At first Pears and Britten went West to California, before returning to wartime England.

Just before they left America came Auden's most intrusive lecture yet, written for Pears's eyes as well: "If you are really to develop to your full stature, you will have, I think, to suffer, and make others suffer, in

ways which are totally strange to you at present." The working relationship now trailed off in parallel with the personal one. Britten provided incidental music for Auden's joint reworking (with Bertolt Brecht) of *The Duchess of Malfi*. But only very small sections of their planned collaboration on a Christmas oratorio called *For The Time Being* were ever set. An Auden poem was used in the *Spring Symphony*. And that was to be it.

Pears said later that "Ben

was on a different track now, and he was no longer prepared to be dominated — bullied — by Wystan". While Auden (and Kallman) went on to create opera libretti for Igor Stravinsky and Hans Werner Henze, Britten was never to collaborate again with a major living poet in his operas and song settings.

● Paul Bunyan opens at Sadler's Wells (0171-363 8000) tomorrow with a reduced price preview. Mendelson's *Wystan Auden* is published by Faber and Faber in May

Jobs for the boys

Never have the pop charts been so full of boy bands and never has the West End been host to so many rock musicals. Put the two together and you have a formula which surely cannot fail. That, at least, is the thinking behind *Boyband*, not a rock musical but a "pop drama", which comes to the London stage in June.

While *Buddy* and *Grease* wallow in Fifties nostalgia and *Saturday Night Fever* and *Mamma Mia!* revisit the Seventies, Peter Quilter's play is an entirely contemporary take on the pop world. The problem is that the show is all pop and little drama. A successful musical stands or falls on the quality of its songs but at the same time it requires some semblance of a plot. The producers are aware of this, and insist that by the time it gets to the West End it will be a different and better show.

Modelled on groups such as Take That and Boyzone, Quilter's fictitious band Freedom are five young men and they all sing and dance impressively. In particular, Damien Flood's lead singer, Sean, and David Crossley as the songwriter Danny. Many of the songs, too, are convincing, cre-



ated under the supervision of music consultant Tina Matthews and several of them, such as *All This And Heaven Too*, could easily hold their own on the Radio 1 playlist.

The plot, such as it is, involves a manipulative manager played by Bryan Murphy and the band's attempt to wrest back control of their career. Yet the characterisation is thin and the manager's lines clichéd. The power struggle within the band between Sean and Danny, loosely based on the falling out between Take That's Gary Barlow and Robbie Williams, is better drawn yet other interesting sub-plots are undeveloped. We have Matt, the gay one, played engagingly by Tom Ashton, the one who already has a child and the one with a drug problem. All three have to keep their circumstances secret but the dramatic potential of the conflict between public and private lives is merely sketched out rather than coloured in.

The next famous five? Freedom, *Boyband*'s fictitious group

The set is minimal but clever use is made of a video screen to show fictitious interviews and MTV coverage and the choreography, under the direction of Billie's dance-music producer Phil Griffin, is powerful. If they can tweak the plot and flesh out the characters a

little more, *Boyband* will be irresistible. And if they release *All This And Heaven Too* as a single, life will surely imitate art and Freedom will have a huge chart hit on their hands.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

There's an awful lot riding on this brand new musical penned by the Scottish actor Forbes Masson, famed thus far as part of a comic team with Alan Cumming. One minute it's a trashy studio-sized affair intended for Glasgow's Tron Theatre, the next director Caroline Hall's Diva Productions have a load of lottery money thrown at them and this self-styled comedy of sex, death and silly songs is touring every major stage in Scotland.

This is essentially Faust revisited for laughs. Nothing new there: Peter Cook and Dudley Moore did it years ago with *Bedazzled*. But there's something about this every-day tale of impotent small-town jobsorth George, who wakes up one day wanting more, that taps into the topsy-turvy psyche of the male, pre-millennial thirtysomething in a wholly heartfelt manner.

Getting *Stiff* onstage has clearly been a labour of love for Masson, who somewhat tellingly takes the lead role in this rumbustious and kitsch affair modelled on camp cult shows of the past 30 years. When Tom McGovern's flamboyant Devil (called Neville) offers George an easy route through the back door to fame, fortune and fornication, it both expresses and debunks the hollow allure of a pseudo-glamorous world where art

Devilish silly



and commerce are shrewdly unfaithful bedfellows; a bit, some would argue, like the theatre world which Masson himself inhabits.

But let's not read too much into things. For when it works best, *Stiff* is a glorious piece of musical fluff that delights in its own silliness. Masson nev-

er lets up from the moment he rises from the grave, while an excellent supporting cast is led hilariously by Jennifer Black as the object of George's affections turned singing nun. Cherubs in drag guard the pearly gates while Gordon Dougal's rousing if somewhat unmemorable tunes are performed live by a cast obviously savouring every double entendre.

Where *Stiff* really falls down is in its pre-election insistence on addressing "the

Scottish question". One-dimensional parochialisms and clichéd political comment will succeed only in shortening both *Stiff*'s lifespan and its travelling power. Director Caroline Hall, however, is to be praised for somehow keeping order. And, with some brutal editing and a three-week run to get things up to speed, Masson should not only have the first big theatrical hit of the new Scottish Parliament on his hands, but will have proved once and for all that it's not just the devils of London's West End who have all the best tunes.

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THE Takacs Trio, formed by the ex-leader of the Takacs Quartet, give next Monday's Radio 3 lunchtime concert at the Wigmore Hall, and they have just released an enterprising and irresistible disc which shows off well the tangy character of their musicianship.

They pay homage to their great musical compatriot Ferenc Liszt in three rarely-heard and delicious transcriptions for piano trio; and they introduce us to his successor, a contemporary of Bartók and Kodály, whose qualities are only just beginning to be made known: Laszlo Lajtha. Lajtha, like Liszt, spent valuable musical time in Paris; and the speaker of Rameau can be discerned through dense clouds of paprika in the fiery Trio Concertant, while the 1930 Sonatine for violin and piano

pays oblique homage to Bach. The sparky enthusiasm of the Takacs Trio certainly whets the appetite to hear more of Lajtha. More, too, over and over again, of Liszt's mischievous makeovers of his own Hungarian Rhapsodies in which the Takacs Trio sound like an oversize one-man gypsy band, and of this intriguing and virtuosic metamorphosis of *Tristia* from La Vallée d'Obermann.

HILARY FINCH

■ OPERA

■ CENTURY'S GREATEST SINGERS IN PUCCINI
Romophone 86001-2 (distributed by Harmonia Mundi)

ROMOPHONE'S arm stretches way back to the first decades of the century for this collection of Puccini allstars. No one born after 1900 gets much of a look in. The finest tracks belong to Gigli, taken when he was in his mid-thirties and before some of the vocal manner-

isms which marred his later years had arrived. The Cavardossi arias from *Tosca* have the warmth and virility of the great tenor in his prime. Equally impressive is Des Grieux being bowled over at his first sight of Manon Lescaut. John McCormack's account of Rodolfo's Act 1 aria from *Bohème* is grace itself.

Slaying with *Bohème*, Lucrezia Bori skips easily between Musetta and Mimì, while Dame Nellie Melba tries a bit too hard to be skittish in the latter role. Claudia Muzio, a dramatic soprano if ever there was one, is shown at her best in *Tosca* and *Suor Angelica*. They were not afraid of Puccini's emotional outbursts in the 1920s, as Sheridan and Perle prove in the final duet from *Manon Lescaut*.

There are no dud tracks, but a dud accompanying booklet.

CDs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345 023498

No texts, and no contexts for chosen extracts. Worse still, there are no singer biographies: only connoisseurs and greybeards are likely to know who Margaret Sheridan and Edith Mason were. So lose a star for shoddy work.

JOHN HIGGINS

■ ORCHESTRAL

■ MENDELSSOHN
Italian and Reformation Symphonies
Vienna PO/Gardiner
DG 459 156-2
*** £15.99

THE stereotypical image of Mendelssohn is that of a prodigiously fluent composer, whose speed and facility of writing inevitably raise suspicions of lack of depth. In fact, he was one of the most scrupulous, perfectionist composers of all time, and plagued by self-doubt. Even the *Italian Symphony*, whose sunny Mediterranean geniality radiates such confidence, was subjected to extensive alteration.

Curiously, this latter, 1834 version (the year following the premiere) has been neither published nor recorded until now, even though it deserves to be regarded as the composer's final thoughts on the subject. An edition by John Michael Cooper is about to be published in Wiesbaden, while John Eliot Gardiner offers both original and revised versions in this new account with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.

The alterations, which affect all movements except the first, range from details of melody and scoring to (in the *Saltarello*) substantial structural modifications. The performances of both versions, as well as of the *Reformation Symphony*, are everything one would expect from this collaboration: perceptive, dynamic and immaculately executed.

BARRY MILLINGTON

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BOOKS

Inside the mind's cage

The victim relives a kidnapping for years afterwards, says **Brian Keenan**

I admit to having had some difficulties with this book: it took me some time to home in on what the author "was pursuing." I became increasingly aware as I read that perhaps Jan Philipp Reemtsma was taking himself hostage again while washing his hands of the trauma of his captivity. Within the first dozen pages he writes: "There is no copyright on your own life, but it's easier to come to terms with every kind of misappropriation if there is a standing text somewhere you can point to."

Jan Philipp Reemtsma, a businessman and intellectual, was abducted outside his house in Hamburg in 1996. Held for ransom, he was chained by his ankles in a small cellar for 33 days. This book, translated by Carol Brown Janeway, is his account of his imprisonment, and as such seemed to me at times a troubled "standing text" on what he might describe as the paradox between intimacy and enmity, those conflicting emotions are the constant reality of the enclosed world of the hostage. This is not an easy subject to write about, as I know from experience: Reemtsma employs a very stylised construct that, for me anyway, obscured the organic development of the work.

Three voices sit in an uneasy harmony: the writer/author, Reemtsma as hostage and an ambiguous "he," Reemtsma from a third party perspective. The elaboration of these personae helps him, as he says, "to incorporate [his experience] into one's own biography, to make it accessible to words." I accept this, but think that it is done in preparation to the written word.

Jan Philipp Reemtsma is the founder/director of the Ham-

IN THE CELLAR
By Jan Philipp Reemtsma

Sackler & Warburg, £14.99
ISBN 0 436 20469 X



burg Institute for social research. His book is very well informed with Freudian and philosophical analysis of his experience and feelings, which I found intriguing. But sometimes I found that the urgent and informed logic the author applies had the tendency to lead to word games and semantic confusion.

I can sympathise with this. The most difficult problem I, like Reemtsma, had to confront in writing about such an experience was this dilemma: how does one write about a time when nothing happened, but everything happened, or what the author calls, a "falling out of the world"?

Maybe because I felt close to Reemtsma and was unconsciously urging him through his existential confrontation that I felt the book took too long to "open up" the cellar. Also, Reemtsma tells us that he and his wife had considered writing a joint book from the separate diaries they kept during his captivity. The project never came about, but I felt that some of this concept was subsumed unsuccessfully into the first half of the book. However, the last third of

the book is where the real conflict begins and where the light begins to filter into the writer's cellar. The rigour of his emotionally scarred intellect demands much of the reader and reveals much about the act of writing. He states: "Writing marked a place outside feeling and in writing he controlled this place".

A few pages later he declares: "English allows you to be succinct, ironic, sarcastic and yet not so much cynical as German." Perhaps it is the cynical distance that holds the author back from "falling out of the world" once more and into his captivity where words and language are no more than the gibberish of Babel.

But he does explore feelings and states I know all too well. He analyses guilt, shame, fear, loneliness and helplessness, all with the clean perception of the intellectual cynic. He questions the central core of Western philosophy and its exposition of the individual, the self and the soul. He enters into debate with St Augustine, Descartes, Montaigne, Hume, Wittgenstein, Sartre and Kant in a fast-paced dialectic that resolves nothing but explores everything. I know this journey. I have travelled with some of these men and a few others — if not with the same erudition as Reemtsma, then with the same passion.

But whatever difficulty I had with the first half of this book and whatever closeness I felt in the last third, the concluding pages disturbed me. The freed hostage looks on life from a point of seemingly irreversible displacement. His world is absurd. His capacity to rejoice is irrevocably damaged. In such a world death is easy and desirable. Hate gnaws at him, but he states: "I gain no compensation from



Apart from a broken nose, the damage done to Reemtsma was mental — his sense of no longer belonging to the world

hated. The time in the cellar destroyed this symmetry too." In the closing pages the author declares himself quite essentially dispossessed. He writes: "I think human Utopias are human fear in distorted form. The feelings I have been trying to describe here can be

summed up in almost no other way. Everything is as it was, except that it and I no longer fit together. . . . I can't get a hold on things anymore. . . . world and self are no longer in harmony." The closing line of the book concludes eerily: "In the cellar feelings of no longer

being part of the world had their place. In the world they have none. The only place I was at home with these feelings was in the cellar."

Reemtsma's book is a poignant testimony and a harrowing attempt to come to terms with himself. But I don't want to believe in the fatalism of his final words — even if at times I feel it breathing down my neck. Because I choose not to. My own captive experience taught me that choice is the crown of life and not to choose is to tumble blindly back into the cellar, with no reprieve.

Statesman present at the creation of the postwar world

Dean Acheson, the subject of James Chace's fine Acheson: *The Secretary of State who Created the American World* (Simon & Schuster, £25; ISBN 0 684 80843 9), is best remembered in this country for his 1962 aphorism at the West Point Military Academy in which he said: "Great Britain has lost an empire and not yet

found a role." It touched a very sore spot only six years after Suez and on the threshold of de Gaulle's veto on our first and already belated attempt to join the Common Market — as it was then called.

But he should be still more remembered for his part in the Marshall Plan, in the putting together of Nato and in the rallying of the Western world

from the post-1945 slough of despond which led on, after 40 years of long and often tense waiting, to the great bloodless victory of 1989. Acheson was not an unduly modest man, but when he called the second (1969) volume of his memoirs *Present at the Creation* it was by no means an unfounded bit of bombast.

As Secretary of State from 1949 to 1953 (having been Under-Secretary in 1945-47) Acheson was, with General George Marshall, one of the twin pillars of the Truman administration. Although he was the epitome of an East Coast foreign policy establishment "gent", Acheson had a profound admiration for the courageous decisiveness of his largely self-educated boss who had been catapulted into the presidency from a background of Missouri machine politics by the death of Roosevelt. They got on very well, despite the fact that Acheson, superficially at least, was exactly the sort of "stuffed shirt" whom Truman instinctively disliked. Acheson's father was an Episcopal clergyman who became Bishop of Connecticut. He himself had been at Groton (America's answer to Eton), at Yale and at the Harvard Law School. He then did two years as law clerk to the great Supreme Court Justice Brandeis before entering a Washington law firm with the splendidly WASP name of Covington and



Truman with the Japanese surrender, 1945. Acheson (in profile) stands on the right

Burling. From this secure base he made his several political excursions into high appointed (but never elected) Democratic office.

He was Roosevelt's Under Secretary of the Treasury in 1933, but lasted only eight months owing to a policy dispute. Then he had four and a half wartime years as one of the four Assistant Secretaries of the State Department, resigned in 1945 to go back to private life and practice, but was summoned back by Truman after a few weeks to be the sole Under Secretary in the Department. He had a more successful legal sabbatical from 1947 to 1949, and then reached his apotheosis when he replaced Marshall for the immensely testing last four

years of Truman's term.

Acheson never really got on with his fellow Grotonian, Roosevelt. This was partly because he felt that the President patronised him, although this was a very difficult thing to do with the astute and self-confident Acheson. Maybe it was because Acheson, in spite of his blue chip education, was in English terms the equivalent of a "poor" Etonian — a Douglas Hurd or a Robert Armstrong — and not a magnate in a Cecil or Rothschild sense, which Roosevelt and his near contemporary Averell Harriman were.

This did not prevent Acheson from being himself capable of great put-downs. In the

last year of his life I observed him doing a spectacular one against the Maine Senator Muskie, trying hard to get Acheson's support for his presidential bid. Muskie responded fuzzily to do with the astute and self-confident Acheson, pressing agreement with his broad argument but adding the gloss that there was need for greater democratic participation in policy making. Acheson turned on him like a matador on a feeble bull: "Are you trying to say, Senator, that United States foreign policy should be determined in a series of little town meetings in the State of Maine? Don't ask them, Senator, tell them. When I believe you will do that, I will support you. Until then, not." It was devastating.

It was also one of the last cries of the 30-year-old history of authoritative American world leadership under the auspices of the Democratic party.

Professor Chace provides a wise and admirably paced account of all the central and fairly familiar events of Acheson's life. His difficulty is that Acheson's memoirs were both comprehensive and sparkling, and indeed I was struck by the fact that when a footnote was interesting enough to make me flick through to the reference appendix the source was nearly always given as *Present at the Creation*. However, he surmounts this and has produced an admirable, essentially political biography.

There is, thankfully, no attempt at psycho-sexual revelation, but there are occasional passages on lifestyle, done with perception, restraint and, as far as I can tell, accuracy. On British matters he tends to be slightly off-beam with the detail but — which is more important — very much on-beam with the major issues. He sees the contradiction in Britain's belief that it could improve its "special" relations with America by remaining detached from a European unity, to which US policy was dedicated, with a clarity which unfortunately eluded successive British Prime Ministers.

ROY JENKINS

Poems with good posture

A DEFINITIVE volume of J.H. Prynne's poetry may be greeted by a broader public with about as much excitement as a complete iguana breeder's manual. But for a small, but steadily growing, elect, its arrival is cause for celebration. His previous collection is out of print. And those who did invest in a copy in the 1980s, have probably rendered it broken-spined by now.

For Prynne is not a lyrical poet whose work seeps gently into the bloodstream. Austere cerebral, his poems are informed by scrupulous cogitation. A Cambridge academic, he is unforgiving of intellectu-

al slackness. Writing on anything from "the matter of other packing" to marzipan, he teases out impossibly abstruse reflections, opens new corridors for thought to stream down only to realise that the endpoint is vanishing fast, that perhaps it would have been better never to have branched off in the first place.

Prynne's poems are conundrums that demand two types of reading. They ask for coffee, a dictionary and the concentration of an upright posture. But they also need the dreamy meditations of semi-recumbency. The reader is likely to nod off mulling over enigmas. But

waking, head half-pollowed on crumpled pages, he finds an untested stream of insights swimming through the mind: "a sweet cheat, newly torn", or the product of "a level ceremony of diffusion" perhaps.

For the new reader I would suggest that the first way into this complex collection lies in a simple appreciation of the pleasure of sound. "Star-naked your sherbet pinch does spin": the car spins / with sharp cries, there / is shear at the flowline: "dimelike delirium / cools at this crossing, with your head in my arms."

Every word is measured with scientific precision. If the ideas that these poems amass are to be understood, the etymologies and associations of a sharply distinctive vocabulary must be pondered. Prynne uses the concepts of finance and science as metaphors for broader philosophical mean-

POEMS
By J. H. Prynne
Bloodaxe, £25
ISBN 1 85224 491 4



ings. Their specialist systems become the touchstones by which the essence of love, desire, linguistic purity, man's relationship to nature or to the eternal, can be tested.

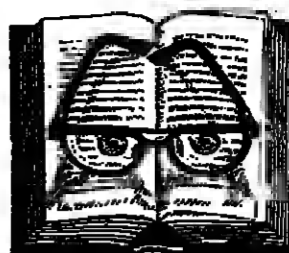
The associations will never be straightforward. This poet's skill is to trace the dif-

fuse ways in which the unedited mind assembles its ideas. Although his poems are not narrative in themselves, they require reading in a meticulously narrative manner.

But before this they require trust. "The whole thing it is, the difficult / matter: to shrink the confines / down". Prynne writes in his opening poem. Holistic theories are not on offer, nor is there any simple reductionist key to each poem.

Yet simple engagement in passages of pure lyricism, backed up by the tautness of lateral coherences, should convince the reader that they are in honourable hands. Prynne may be difficult and unfamiliar. But this is because he is a poet who questions the possibilities of his chosen form with as much art and rigour as T.S. Eliot ever did.

RACHEL CAMPBELL-JOHNSTON



BIBLIOMANE

A blast to the masses

■ EZRA POUND, most uncompromising of literary critics, wrote a series of substantial articles in 1917 about the British press and the tastes it played to. He was despairingly funny about the magazines of the masses, such as *Answers*. "The cover addresses me in these terms: 'It will be a red-letter day for you when you receive the corsets, because it will be the beginning of a new life. From the moment when you put them on a ceaseless stream of magnetism permeates the whole body from head to heel. . . . You feel a different woman.'"

In his investigation of "English Kultur", Pound came up against *The Spectator*, and found it "an unfailing butt". Hearsay told him that it "dictated the conservative policy whatever that phrase may mean". He quotes a few disjointed sentences, illustrating absence of thought. "The Government must act with a proper sense etc. . . ." "The PM made a v.g. speech o.t.w. at Queen's Hall last Sat., the 3d anniv. of G.B. entry i.t.c."

This may look like sloppiness. It isn't. Pound's "etc." points out the omnipresence and futility of sentences proclaiming that "The Government must", and the tautology of calling for "a proper sense of . . .", — because the writer is saying no more than that it is proper to have a proper sense. But the great critical stroke comes with his use of those initial letters, which point out how readily the reader can supply the missing words "on the war" and "into the conflict".

He goes on to quote "Our aeroplanes played a.g.p. i.t.v.", showing how words are deadened by their inevitability, just as they are today when a decision by Sinn Féin is said to be "a blow to the p.p.", or we are told of the Serbs "rounding up i.m.w. and c". War and diplomacy rely on verbal placbos — talk of "ground troops" as though there were another kind — but it is instructive to see how much writing can be abbreviated to Pound's "etc.". "All one can pray for," he concluded, "is more honesty and less camouflage." His articles deserve to be reprinted.

■ THE Yale Younger Poets series has been going for 80 years, and the YYP Anthology (£25/£10.50), edited and introduced by George Bradley, is chunky and uneven. It is a reminder of how little American poetry is known in Britain. The most established names are often strangers here.

The latest Younger Poet is Craig Arnold, whose *Shells* (£12.50/£7.50) is about masculinity, food and the difficulties of tenderness. There are good, rather weird stories here about obsessive behaviour. *Sexual batter between friends is suddenly thrown down like a gauntlet; a craving for spicy food turns pathological. Arnold describes the hard, helmeted surface that men like to show, and how they fear humiliation. Like the collector of blades who thought his interest was "purely amateur", he cuts to the quick.*

■ DEIGHTON, BELL, in Cambridge recently catalogued a thousand books of 20th-century poetry from the library of the poet David Posner, greatly underpricing many rare copies. The books were sold almost immediately for what must have been tens of thousands of pounds less than their value — mostly to dealers, who took them to the San Francisco bookfair. Deighton, Bell itself, along with Heffers, has now been bought by Blackwells.

JIM McCUE

IN metro ON SATURDAY

A BIG GIRL NOW: Sophie Parkin talks about her second novel, *Take Me Home*. ALSO: Back from the dead — John Keats tells metro how he wrote

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CHANGING TIMES

The wild

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BOOKS

The wild border between fable and fiction

Andrew Greig's novel, *When They Lay Bare*, draws the reader into a powerful tale of love and vengeance

Authors are not known for plying up on the subject of sin, but there's one evil most all of them will comfortably agree upon: plagiarism. The lines are clearly drawn: this is mine, that is yours, keep out. At a second glance, however, it's not quite as easy as all that. School teachers constantly come up against the problem of admitting that, er, well, no, Shakespeare didn't make up those stories, he nicked them from someone else. A few years ago an Australian scholar levelled an accusation of plagiarism at Graham Swift, claiming that his Booker Prize-winning novel *Last Orders* had a structure and story uncomfortably close to William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*, however, months earlier, *The Times* reviewer, Claire Messud, noted not plagiarism but an homage to the late American writer. In the face of this confusion, it is worth reminding ourselves that

there are some stories which seem to spring — eternally, and eternally renewed — from a kind of story-bank kept safe through generations of human minds. This is not quite the same as making the argument, as some do, that there are only seven stories in all the world; just that there are narratives that have drawn and will draw people from all cultures in all times. Stories of love and betrayal; of familial antagonisms; of supernatural doings. It was recently pointed out to me that the presumably modern obsession with X-Files alien abductions is no more than an updating of the old legends, with their fairy kings and queens whisking hapless mortals away with them. And so to Andrew Greig, whose debut novel, *When They Lay Bare*, is a skilful riff on an ancient ballad. *The Two Corbies* is a border ballad, its origins in the "debatable lands" between Scotland and England where, in the 15th and 16th centuries,

only a natural law of honour and retribution existed between families and clans. An unidentified narrator overhears two ravens, or corbies, planning the feast they will make on the body of a slain knight whose lady — for unknown reasons — has taken another lover. It is a spare and haunting tale: never mentioned are the actual causes of the knight's death, or the source of the enmity that lay behind his killing. It is through this ancient skeleton's whitening ribs that Greig, in the best and oldest tradition of story-spinning, has threaded his tale. Greig brings Danish rivalry into the modern day. David Elliot is set to inherit the estate of his father, Sir Simon Elliot, or what's left of it. Half was lost when Sir Simon and David's mother divorced, in large part due to an affair the elder Elliot had with a woman who was a lauder, the two families at odds for generations. Jimmy Lauder died in mysterious circumstances; now



her daughter — perhaps Simon's child but perhaps not — arrives, apparently from nowhere, on the estate bearing her mother's only treasure: a collection of plates that tell in faded shards the story of *The Two Corbies*. During the course of the novel one of the plates is explosively smashed: it would be fair to say that the arrival of Marnie Lauder

has a similar effect on the Elliots. *When They Lay Bare* respects and transforms the tradition it springs from. It is now a commonplace to say that the most exciting new writers in Britain come from north of the border — from Alasdair Gray to Irvine Welsh to Alison Kennedy to Alex Bennie — if further proof were needed, Greig provides it. He is adventurous and precise with his language, moving with ease between standard English and dialect Scots. A skill like this might, however, be seen as little more than a sleight of hand performed with vowels and consonants; what goes deeper is the author's ability to delineate the landscape of emotion — and the emotion in the landscape — with enviable grace. He is particularly good at the latter, raising before the reader's eyes the bleakly savage landscape that still exists — remarkably — only a few hundred miles from the mild and sleepy south: a place of trees twisted by wind, of sharp-eyed hawks, of treacherous burns. As to the former, it would be hard to say that his writing is clear where the feelings of his characters are concerned: better that he is adept at

conveying their confusion. Modern men and women, they are trapped in a story that is more their inheritance than any acre or heirloom. Few writers, these days, have the courage to grapple with Fate: Greig meets it head on. The old ballads draw in the listener with their sparseness and their story. *When They Lay Bare* does the same, for this is a thriller and no mistaking it, though one as black and deep as a border tarr. Marnie Lauder unsettles the already uneasy lives of the Elliots and those around them; in this haunted story it is hardly surprising to find Sim Elliot's factor, Tat, with a gift for carving goblin netsuke, the ruby eyes of his tiny beasts gazing out with the silent wisdom of blood. Who Marnie really is, her mother's real fate: that is for the reader to discover, as Greig's tale sings through this book. "O'er his white banes when they are bare! The winds shall blow for evermore! The winds shall blow for evermore!"

WHEN THEY LAY BARE
By Andrew Greig
Faber, £16.99
ISBN 0 571 19687 X



On the run from love

SISTER
By A. Manette Ansay
Allison & Busby Ltd, £7.99
ISBN 0 749 00 403 7
SAM is a fallen angel in a fiercely Catholic family. Brought up by the scruff of his neck, his father practised the kind of rough love that gives a sore heart and a sore head. A. Manette Ansay begins her tale from the Midwest with the news of Sam's disappearance. She pieces together his life through the eyes of his sibling Abigail. Sister wooed the critics when it came out in America earlier this year. With her insight into the anatomy of persecution, she can only repeat the exercise over here.

Savage battle of a secret war

I remember very clearly sitting in the Malay jungle as a newly commissioned officer nearly 30 years ago, reading with mounting dismay Noel Barber's *Sinister Twilight* (still the best book on the fall of Singapore), wondering how on earth the Japanese seemed to arrive so unexpectedly — and what, indeed, I was doing there 30 years on. John Colvin's *Nomonhan* — a battle I had never heard of then — explains all. By 1905, at the end of the Russo-Japanese War, Japan had gone from the closed society of the Shogunate to an imperial power with a growing appetite for foreign raw materials — and in fewer than 40 years, Manchuria continued to be a cause of friction, however, and during the late 1920s and 1930s some in the Japanese general staff became convinced that war with Soviet Russia and her satellite state Outer Mongolia was necessary. This, the so-called "Strike North" policy, was

ALLAN MALLINSON

NOMONHAN
By John Colvin
Quartet Books, £18
ISBN 0 7043 7112 X



opposed by the Japanese navy, principally, and those in the general staff who favoured expansion south into Indo-China. The Japanese Kwantung army, occupying Manchuria, acted increasingly independently of Tokyo and drove "Strike North" strongly. In 1939 the disputed Kha-

lkin Gol, a 60 mile buffer along the Halha river, demarcating the border between Mongolia and Manchuria, became the scene of fierce fighting between the technologically superior Soviet army (under Zhukov) and the fanatically brave Japanese. It is not just the casualty figures at Nomonhan, as the principal battle is usually called, that chill (anything from 25,000 to 50,000 Japanese dead); it is the nature of the fighting — desperate, confused, visceral: "Yamagata's Group 2 horribly ambushed 150 Soviet Buriat Mongols singing military ditties on the march, and slaughtered 80 of them at point-blank range over open sights, taking two prisoners. All fighting is desperate, confused and visceral, but at Nomonhan it was "personal" too — the race factor. John Colvin is exceptionally well qualified to write of the battle, its origins and consequences — the only book in English to consider all three



A Mongolian pilot and a Russian officer before the battle of Nomonhan, 1939. Picture: the Mongolian Embassy

fully. He was born in Tokyo, served in the Royal Navy during the Second World War and then joined the diplomatic service, becoming High Commissioner in Kuala Lumpur, Consul General in Hanoi and Ambassador to Mongolia. He writes economically, his style a mixture of Foreign Office tel-

egrams and naval signal. The reader must pay attention. But the pearls are there: "In the propaganda section of the HQ, the poet Konstantin Simonov found the earth floor littered with photographs taken from Japanese corpses — Mount Fuji, snaps of parents, wives, children, cherry blossoms, all that heartbreak in the huge, military machine with its grand, pitiless movement of events, trampled by the feet of white strangers."

After Nomonhan the Japanese had no expansion alternative but to strike south (and Pearl Harbor), and Colvin speculates convincingly on the

consequences for the war in Europe had Nomonhan been a victory for them — the only comforting bit of an otherwise gruesome story. Allan Mallinson is a serving Army colonel. His novel, *A Close Run Thing*, is published by Bantam, £15.99.

In the dock

CORNER KINGDOM
By John Campbell
Lagan Press, £5.99
ISBN 1 87368765 6
THE debut novel by John Campbell, a Belfast poet, takes us to the dockyard where he worked from school leaving age until 1985. Descriptions of working class Belfast in the Fifties includes the detail to be expected of a man who has spent over 30 years on the job. Campbell shadows a young boy from his first day at work. But what could be a sickly-sweet mouthful of nostalgia — where flat-capped workers sweat blood, read *The Mirror* and drink warm ale — has a ferocious aftertaste.

Easy does it

DOÑA PERFECTA
By Benito Pérez Galdós
Phoenix House, £16.99
ISBN 1 861591 31
THIS fresh translation, by A. R. Tulloch, of a book by the 19th-century writer Benito Pérez Galdós explores the effect the social changes of 19th-century Spain had on the country's religious orthodoxy. Pepe Ray leaves Madrid for the rural nowhere of Orbeja where he means to claim an inheritance. But his aunt, Doña Perfecta, treats on her nephew's plans. Although Pérez Galdós is acute in his portrayal of relatives who can't quite relate, *Doña Perfecta* never quite recovers from its drowsy beginning.

ALEX O'CONNELL

Ferocious flower fetish

Tulipmania has been much in evidence this year. Perhaps as we recoil from the greed of the previous decade, the idea of how another nation once attracted disaster by its speculation on the tulip bulb offers the consolations of history. In the case of Deborah Moggach's *Tulip Fever* it also inspires a sumptuous and enthralling novel about art, love, illusion and money. Sophia is the young and beautiful wife of an Amsterdam merchant, Cornelis. A collector of beautiful things in a city famed for its wealth and propriety, Cornelis adores her. Sophia, however, is cold and childless; her closest relationship is with her maid, Maria. Unlike her mistress, Maria is all too well acquainted with the lineaments of love, enjoying the embraces of the local fishmonger, Willem. Then the adoring Cornelis hires a painter, Jan van Loos, to immortalise his marriage on canvas. Inevitably, Jan and Sophia fall in love, but it is Maria, not Sophia, who becomes pregnant. Pretending to be with child herself, the mistress can keep her maid — and reject her husband, whose embraces make her feel "like an upturned beetle pressed down by a shoe". Soon, another plot begins to form, born of desperation and opportunism. Vast fortunes can be made by speculating on a single tulip bulb — and it is money, as well as cunning, which will set Sophia and Jan free. Moggach writes marvelously about the world of the senses. Sex, food, cloth and Amsterdam in the 1630s are all described with a passionate precision, a delight in the sensual that is reminiscent of Michèle Roberts. Her small cast of characters are thor-

AMANDA CRAIG

TULIP FEVER
By Deborah Moggach
Heinemann, £14.99
ISBN 0 434 00779 X



oughly known and their contortions in the cage of materialism are evoked with compassion, wit and humour. The shimmering, watery nature of Holland itself is linked so skilfully to every metaphor in the novel that its moral intelligence could easily be overlooked. At its heart, *Tulip Fever* is about the world of the spirit and its conflict with the world of the flesh. As each character executes his or her move in the intricate tragicomedy that develops, it is this spiritual dimension which deepens the novel and provides the denouement of a classic.

Where the novel is less satisfactory is in the author's mistrust of the reader's intelligence. Moggach has not, so far, been given her due as a novelist — perhaps because of her unfashionable fidelity to narrative — and it could be this which produces a sense of strain, of trying to be at once literary and middlebrow. She is good enough to let her work speak for itself, but again and again the skeleton of research grins through. As a reader, you thoroughly resent this. We



Passion blossoming from a bloom. Picture: Bridgeman

come to believe in Jan's existence — until his dates are given. We believe in his paintings, until we find, interleaved in the novel, 16 colour reproductions of famous Dutch Old Masters. It's babyish enough to have illustrations, but these actually weaken the text. The fact that they are, in themselves, masterpieces does nothing for the imaginary world the author

has conjured up out of words. Anyone who loves painting (and indeed, anyone who loves gardening) will relish this book, which is the best of its kind since Barry Unsworth's *Stone Virgin*. But for Deborah Moggach to achieve the heights one senses she is capable of, she needs — like her own painter — to think less about the vices exemplified by tulip fever.



■ GARRISON KEILLOR has a new book coming from Faber. It is the "biography" of Jimmy "Big Boy" Valente, a professional wrestler who became Governor of Minnesota. Anything to do with Jesse Ventura, the ex-wrestler who is, in fact, Governor of Minnesota? Ooe wonders what the hurry Ventura will think. Keillor claims it's a "great novel, not mean at all" — but he's also called the Governor "this great big honking bullet-headed shovel-faced nut who talks in a steroid growl and doesn't stop." There's a headlock for you.

■ THE Royal Society of Literature was hoping to launch a new annual of good writing by its Fellows, edited by John Gross and Hilary Mantel, but the society has given up. In its current bulletin, the chairman Michael Holroyd thanks Gross for "having tested the idea to its destruction". The trouble is that the Fellows are nearly all professional writers, and were reluctant to write for less than their usual fees.

■ THE TLS reports that Michael Pastore found that his child-care book, *Dynastic Counsellors Don't Explode*, was at number 1,106,125 on the Amazon.com bestseller lists. Soon afterwards, he heard he had gone up by 400,000 places — by selling 12 more copies.

■ books@the-times.co.uk

I HOPE EVERYONE READS MARA AND DANN AND THAT IT WINS ALL THE PRIZES

LITERARY REVIEW

DORIS LESSING

Mara and Dann

AN ADVENTURE

AN ECOLOGICAL WARNING, A CAUTIONARY FABLE AND A QUEST FOR SURVIVAL AND TRUTH

www.fireandwater.com

Brideshead and beyond

Once it was a question of how to convince Oxbridge colleges that they wanted you as a student. Increasingly, however, Oxford and Cambridge have had to go on the offensive to convince students that they might want to choose one of these two universities.

So the question "What are the ancient universities looking for?" has evolved to include "And what do they offer that students might be seeking?" And there is the added complication of how best to choose your college if it seems as if both parties can do business.

First then, what are Oxford and Cambridge after? It helps to look good on paper, of course, but perfection is not a prerequisite. Established excellence in one area may be preferred against consummate achievement across the board, and this is where the school reference plays a crucial part. If a student does not have a string of starred As at GCSE, but is a genius in his or her chosen field, then their school has an obligation to say so.

Much is read into that "extra certain something" expected of Oxbridge candidates. All this really means is an appetite to learn, an ability to be taught and a capacity to think beyond the bounds of A level towards some larger academic picture.

In this context it is essential that candidates use the interview to demonstrate that they are capable of handling the demands of the tutorial system. Like a tutorial, the interview is less about getting answers right or wrong than it is about keeping the intellectual ball rolling and giving the impression that you would enjoy keeping it rolling for a further three years.

Of course the interview procedure cuts both ways. If done play the encounter as an exercise in sadomasochism, then students are entitled to have second thoughts about whether or not they might be happier elsewhere.

This leads us to our second point of inquiry: what do Cambridge and Oxford deliver?

The transformation of the student population from the grateful beneficiaries of higher education into canny consumers means that the many advantages of the Oxbridge system are now weighed against a variety of other considerations — from the limited vocational content of most courses to the abject lack of nightlife in either city. Many view Oxbridge merely as a social anachronism that they can live without.

After years of access schemes and target-schools activity, the ancient universi-

Hannah Betts debunks the myth of Oxbridge as a home for the privileged

ties are somewhat surprised to find that they continue to be seen as some sort of *Brideshead Revisited* throwback. And indeed, if social anxieties are the only thing holding a student back from applying, he or she should certainly think again; the only anachronism at work here is the myth of anachronism itself.

Nor is it impossible to get in, whatever the universities' reputation for being ultra-selective. The average is three applicants per place, while at Bristol, Sheffield or Manchester universities it is more likely to be ten.

What Oxbridge offers can be summarised in simple material terms. It has world-class libraries; excellence in academic teaching; a tutorial system that can be tailored to meet individual needs and interests; an atmosphere in which scholarship is valued at all levels; and a respect for personal intellectual development sometimes missing at larger institutions.

The amount of money circulating through these two universities actually works to the advantage, rather than to the detriment, of poorer students — hardship, book and travel grants augment the traditional stipend offered by the college scholarship. Even the lack of after-hours entertainment is in some way compensated for by the vast number of celebri-

ties willing to pass through the universities' hallowed corridors.

At a more worldly level, some graduates speak highly of the network of contacts that they have built up by the time they leave college. Moreover, it is certainly still the case that some employers feel that Oxbridge is something special and happily turn to the ancient universities for their graduate intake.

If this sounds appealing, the only remaining decision is which college — a choice typically dictated by a combination of knowing someone who went there, knee-jerk prejudice and the random superstitions of a student's sixth-form adviser. The college identities are considerably more homogenised than they were 20 years ago when issues such as the decline of public school dominance, the admission of women to "men's colleges" and greater student activism could create odd pockets of communal behaviour.

Both Oxford and Cambridge publish formal (university) and informal (student) admissions guides that help to simplify the process. In this case at least, size is important and students need to weigh up whether they can handle the potential claustrophobia of a community of 350 or the prospect of a less cohesive peer group of twice that size.

Applicants could do a lot worse than to read some of the work written by the individual who will teach them. This is after all, the person who will grant them their education for the next three years — what better insight into the way in which their mind works? Take the opportunity to visit, but bear in mind that the open days tend to be during the vacation and colleges always feel rather odd with nobody in them.

Be prepared to think laterally — a college's reputation for good food may seem like an irrelevance, but it produces a real community focus, and with a minimum of three years ahead, it may ultimately become rather more important. Similarly, a college's wealth may seem only a minor consideration, but it may have a big impact on living costs, rent rises and subsequent scholarships.

Prince William is said to be considering his choice at Oxbridge, with Lincoln College, Oxford, the current seat of Eric Anderson, the Prince of Wales's friend and former teacher, rumoured to be a strong favourite. This may present a final consideration for Prince William's many young admirers.



Graduating from Oxford: like Cambridge, a great place for forming networks

IN THE GUIDE TOMORROW
The 1999 edition of the original league table: will Cambridge still be top? Plus, which are the popular subjects, and do they lead to jobs?



One of Magdalen college's two new Gothic-style student accommodation blocks

Dealing with the highs and lows

How to get value from reading the Norrington and Tompkins tables

Cambridge and Oxford have a love-hate relationship with the tables that establish their academic rankings, *Hannah Betts* writes.

On the one hand, the attribution of points for graduates' degree results is dismissed as only a crude index of academic success. At the same time, whenever the latest rankings are published, High Table gossip is about little else.

Certainly there is an argument for viewing these tables with some cynicism. They are compiled on the basis that a first is worth five points, a 2:1 four, a 2:2 three and a third-class degree one point. This means that poorer performance by a relatively small number of undergraduates can have a dramatic effect on a particular year's figures.

If applicants allow the tables to influence their choice of college, they should take into account more than one year's results.

The latest Norrington Table of Oxford colleges should be viewed in this light. While some colleges achieve a fairly stable performance, others show a degree of flux. Balliol is back on form after plummeting to 19th place last year, from its previous position of second. Christ Church similarly restores its fortunes.

Worcester has risen impressively from near the bottom of the list to make the top ten. St Peter's, one of the poorer colleges, improves its ranking, albeit less dramatically, to make the top 20.

Others fare less well. Corpus Christi plummets from seventh to twenty-fourth place and Trinity drops from eighth to twenty-fifth.

Cambridge's Tompkins Table, compiled by Peter Tompkins of Price Waterhouse, reveals far less erratic results. Trinity, Queens' and Christ's retain their position as the top three colleges, with merely a slight reshuffling. In the main, performance is similarly static.

Sidney Sussex's performance is the only surprise, dropping from fourth to seventeenth place. Founded in 1596, Sidney Sussex is the newest of the older colleges, but lacks the wealth of many of its peers.

This leads to the final caveat about the league tables. Older, richer colleges tend to do well, while newer, poorer ones typically fare badly — with women's colleges traditionally low down in, if not bottom of, the pile.

New Hall — one of Cam-

1 (4) Jesus	84.0
2 (1) Merton	83.8
3 (5) Wadham	83.5
4 (2) St John's	83.3
5 (19) Balliol	82.8
6 (3) University	82.1
7 (13) Queen's	82.0
8 (12) St Ed Hall	81.2
9 (6) Keble	80.7
10 (27) Worcester	80.8
11 (11) Magdalen	80.2
12 (20) Christ Ch	80.2
13 (14) L M Hall	79.3
14 (9) New College	79.3
15 (24) Mansfield	79.2
16 (10) Oriel	79.1
17 (16) Lincoln	79.1
18 (15) Exeter	78.9
19 (18) Brasenose	78.9
20 (29) St Peter's	78.1
21 (23) Pembroke	78.1
22 (21) St Anne's	77.8
23 (17) Hertford	77.2
24 (7) Corpus C	77.1
25 (8) Trinity	76.9
26 (24) St Hilda's	76.9
27 (22) St Hugh's	76.4
28 (26) St Cat's	75.2
29 (25) Somerville	73.3
30 (30) Harris Man	70.5

1 (3) Trinity	66.35
2 (3) Queens'	64.52
3 (2) Christ's	64.50
4 (8) Caius	64.12
5 (7) Emmanuel	63.73
6 (11) Clare	63.22
7 (6) Trinity Hall	62.64
8 (10) St John's	62.54
9 (5) Pembroke	62.49
10 (14) King's	61.61
11 (12) Downing	61.22
12 (13) Fitzwilliam	60.83
13 (15) Churchill	60.26
14 (9) St Cath's	59.73
15 (16) Selwyn	59.64
16 (20) Jesus	59.61
17 (4) S Sussex	58.60
18 (23) Corpus C	58.22
19 (21) Robinson	58.01
20 (18) Newnham	57.93
21 (22) Girton	57.35
22 (17) Magdalen	57.17
23 (19) Peterhouse	57.14
24 (24) New Hall	55.6

bridge's two women's colleges — languishes at the bottom of its list for the second year running, while Newnham — the other — comes in at twentieth place.

St Anne's, Oxford's one remaining women's college, is in twenty-second place. Somerville went co-educational in 1994 in a move interpreted by many as an attempt to improve its academic results. However, it continues to perform badly at twenty-ninth.

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CHANGING TIMES

Guidelines are available to students looking for off-campus accommodation, says **Lucien Watkins**

When finding digs becomes a nightmare

When a student is leaving home for the first time, accommodation standards are as big a worry as the ability to cope with the academic work.

Today's students are more fortunate than their predecessors as more universities can now offer the security and comfort of in-hall accommodation. But those who do not have this option, such as my son Gavin, will depend on private accommodation.

After a day of accommodation-hunting last September, Gavin found a room in an old property occupied by several students. When he moved in he realised immediately that he had made a mistake. With his ground-floor room next to the kitchen, he had difficulty

sleeping and was constantly being disturbed. Bins and rotting food littered the kitchen. Peeling wallpaper glittered with damp and security was poor: one night his treasured mountain bike was stolen. So where did Gavin go wrong? Ruth Harper, Salford University's Student Union accommodation officer, says: "We try to produce checklists for room-seekers."

When it comes to advertising on campus, many universities allow only those properties that have been inspected and for which up-to-date gas and electrical appliance certificates can be produced. Environmental health officers suggest that there should be no more than six people sharing a single bathroom, toilet and



Senay Bozas, a postgraduate media student at Cardiff, moves into the flat she will share

kitchen, and emphasise the importance of checking that there is an adequate means of escape in case of fire.

Accommodation officers offer guidelines for those who have found rooms:

- Always have a copy of the inventory; if the landlord does not provide one, do it yourself. Detail problems to the landlord or agency in writing. The landlord has an obligation to carry out repairs.

Try to get agreements checked out before signing and ask current tenants whether they are happy.

• When things do go wrong, go to the student union. If it is a legal matter, the union may

fund a meeting with a solicitor.

Many students are unsure about the best time to start hunting for a room. Susan Goddard, accommodation officer at Reading University, admits that students often panic and are looking now in the spring rather than later in the year. "But," she says, "no student is left to sleep rough if they contact us."

Other accommodation officers say that few, if any, students are left without a permanent roof over their head at the start of term. But in the event of someone not finding accommodation, Reading and other universities have strategies in place. Dr Goddard organises a house-hunting day in September during which the student union, the borough council housing advice service, environmental health and third-year students offer invaluable assistance.

Our son's episode ended on a positive note. Although he lost his deposit, he found alternative accommodation quickly with a landlord on the premises. The landlord's wife even baked my son cakes, making him feel right at home.

It pays to be closer to home

THE COURSE, the city and the university's reputation will always be the main factors in choosing where to study, but tight budgets mean accommodation costs are becoming an increasingly important consideration. For students in London, the NUS says, the average weekly rent outside hall is now £87 a week, while similar accommodation in the North and the Midlands is less than £35 a week.

In crude terms, where you go to study and the resultant living costs could determine how many years you keep your overdraft after finishing university. It will also make a big difference to a student's level of solvency and therefore his or her

performance. Research by the London University accommodation service shows a link between housing and academic success.

On average, students are paying about 60 per cent of their weekly income on rent, forcing more and more of them to think twice before moving away from home to study. At Coventry University, the proportion of students from the immediate region has grown from 42 per cent to 54 per cent in seven years.

Many students like to have their

own accommodation in the second and third years. Few universities can guarantee residential places beyond the first year.

The NUS claims that, as more colleges contract out their halls of residence to management companies, rents are starting to rise at twice the rate of inflation. The average institutionally provided accommodation costs £48 a week.

Rents are not the only costs for students. In the toughest housing markets, landlords demand retain-

ers for the summer months and higher deposits. The average deposit in London is more than £250.

To cover their living costs, 40 per cent of full-time students have to work at part-time jobs. This works to the advantage of some institutions. Hull University — where private-sector rents are £26 to £30 a week and a surplus of accommodation means that rents are actually falling — is becoming more popular. Jim Dumsday, the university spokesman, says: "With debt and

overdrafts becoming more and more of an issue, the cost of accommodation is moving up in the students' priority tables."

	Av. rent £	Av. deposits £
Private landlord		
Scotland	44	133
Wales	38	76
North West	35	160
North East	34	93
East Anglia	51	216
East Midlands	34	141
West Midlands	33	147
South West	46	183
South East	48	225
London	87	251

Source: NUS Accommodation Costs Survey

HUGH THOMPSON

Running towards the 5hr mark

On the move: even the London Marathon was not immune from that ubiquitous modern accessory, the mobile phone

A black and white photograph of a person, likely a runner, wearing a dark t-shirt. The t-shirt has the word 'FLOR' printed on it, and below it, a race bib with the number '255' and the letters 'EIS'. The person is also wearing a light-colored, patterned skirt or shorts. The background is dark and indistinct.

accessory, the mobile phone

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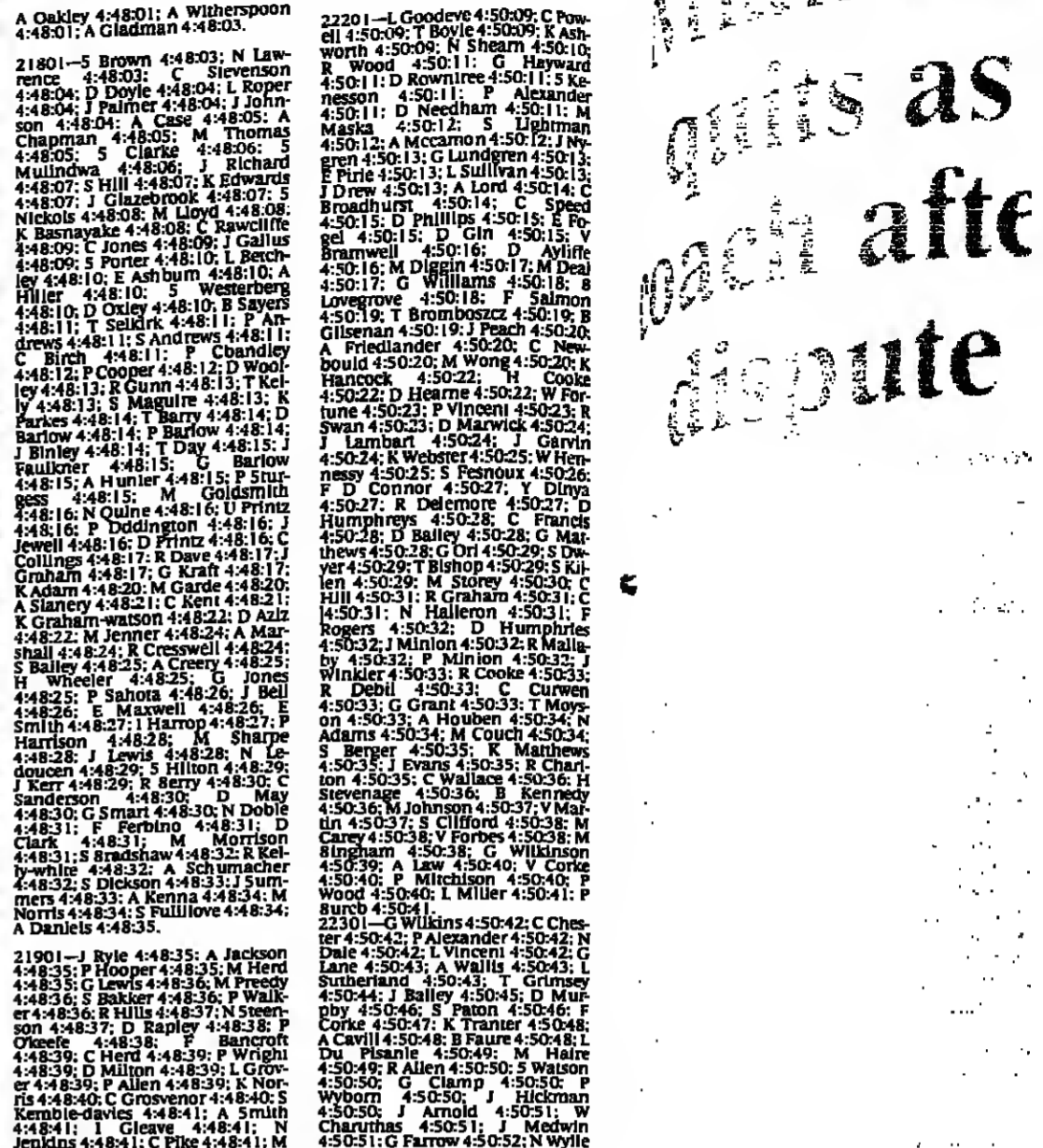
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They're off: competitors in the wheelchair race get their arms whirling to good effect early on Sunday morning

as after ute

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More results tomorrow

SNOOKER

Davis finds cruel defeat hard to bear

By PHIL YATES

WHILE the level of disappointment was not quite as acute as in 1985, Steve Davis still found his 10-9 defeat by Joe Perry in the first round of the Embassy world championship at the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield, yesterday a crushing blow.

Fourteen years ago, Davis famously lost 18-17 to Dennis Taylor on the black with the title at stake, having led 8-0. He recovered from a 7-2 overnight deficit against Perry to force a deciding frame but, even with momentum as a powerful ally, he was again denied.

Perry, the world No 74, became one of the select group of players to make a century on his debut at the Crucible but his commanding first-session advantage owed more to a succession of unforced errors from the former champion.

On the resumption yesterday, Davis upped his tempo. Breaks of 51, 42, 64, 70, 46 and 45 allied to a refreshingly positive approach — he willingly took on the long pots that he has so often ignored of late — helped him to draw level at 9-9.

Leading 52-0 in the deciding frame, Davis overcut a tricky blue to a middle pocket but, even then, with the remaining balls awkwardly located, it was difficult to imagine that Perry, so short of experience and table time during the session, could possibly win.

Having scored 74, Perry enjoyed an outrageous slice of good fortune. He fluked the last red, flicking it in off the pink and in doing so was dou-

bly blessed in that he both brought the pink into the open and obtained perfect position on the brown.

"I was so nervous I had to start taking deep breaths. My legs were like jelly," Perry, who exploited his lucky break to clear the colours and reach the last 16 of a world-ranking tournament for the first time since turning professional in 1991, said.

Last month, after losing 5-4 on the black to Stephen Hendry at the China International in Shanghai, Davis amusingly apologised to the local media for a delay in attending his press conference by saying: "I've been trying to kill myself."

Yesterday, he confessed: "I just swore and swore my head off for half an hour. It's never nice to lose, particularly here. Of course I am sick, he fluked the last red for God's sake."

While Davis did not lament his ill-luck any further, preferring to state repeatedly that it was the best snooker he has played at the championship for a decade, his frustration was obvious for he must now rely on other results — such as Alan McManus defeating Jimmy White and John Parrott beating Chris Small — to extend his tenure in the top 16 into a twentieth consecutive season.

Hendry, who replaced Davis as the game's predominant force in 1990 and has also triumphed at the Crucible on six occasions, was in danger of first-round elimination

for the second year in succession, after losing to White 12 months ago.

The Scot, 5-4 ahead of Paul Hunter overnight, fell 8-7 adrift on the restart before displaying his renowned resilience. When Hunter overcut a red to a middle pocket with the sixteenth frame in the balance, Hendry put together a run of 36 to level at 8-8.

Hunter, one of the best players to emerge from the qualifying competition, then fell victim to the increasing pressure.

His missed pink in the next frame led to a 68 break from Hendry and when Hunter jawed a straight blue to a balk pocket in the next, Hendry pounced with a break of 93 to complete a 10-8 victory.

"I'd have been in a state of shock if I'd lost, but I must admit there were a couple of times when I started to wonder what I'd do with myself over the next fortnight. I would have been especially gutted because I know I am playing as good as ever," Hendry said.

Hendry, winner of four events during a season highlighted by his capture of the Scottish Open and Benson and Hedges Irish Masters titles, will meet James Wattana, of Thailand, in the last 16.

Wattana, 23, is ranked 101st in the world.

Wattana, 23, is ranked 101st in the world. He is a former world champion and has won several titles.



An elated Perry salutes his supporters after sinking the black in the deciding frame of his first-round match against Davis

SQUASH

Nottingham prove worthy champions

By COLIN MCQUILLAN

CAPITAL One Nottingham took the SRA National Squash League (NSL) title for the first time late on Tuesday night with a 4-1 win over UK Packaging in the final play-off at St Albans, Nottingham.

Derbyshire, the defending league champions, in the regional pools, cruised unopposed into the final when Pottery Bar were expelled from the league for failing to field a team.

The undefeated fifth string woman, Natalie Grainger, of South Africa, was detained by the semi-finals of the WISPA world grand prix play-offs in Egypt, but Nottingham swept resolutely through the men's line-up put out by the UK Packaging squad from the Connaught Club, in Chingford, Simon Parke, the England No 2, and David Evans, the Welsh champion, led the rout with four-game victories over Tim Garner and Julian Wellings respectively, with

Lee Beachill and Jason Nicolle following up with straight-games wins over Stuart Cowie and Lee Jemmett.

The women's point went to Linda Charman, but not before Tania Bailey, the world junior champion brought in to replace Grainger, had won the opening game and taken the third to a tie-break.

"We were bitterly disappointed by Pottery Bar failing to arrive for the semi-final," Phil Songhurst, the team manager, said. "We had regional television units already set up. But the first title for the club more than makes up for it."

Parke and Grainger remained the only undefeated players in the league, finishing with seven wins in seven appearances. UK Packaging, who include the world No 1, Peter Nicol, and the world junior champion, Ong Beng Hee, in their squad but failed to utilise them in their NSL campaign, defeated UNL Northumberland in the semi-finals.

SPORT IN BRIEF

RUGBY LEAGUE: Keighley Cougars yesterday released Lee Crooks, their coach for 12 months, after the Northern Ford Premiership side's fifth league defeat of the season. Crooks, the former Great Britain forward, said it was a financial decision and he had resigned by mutual agreement. Gateshead Thunder's home JJB Super League match against Wigan Warriors, on August 1, has been switched to Tynecastle, Edinburgh, where a franchise has been mooted.

REAL TENNIS: Kate Leeming, of Australia, the eighth seed for the Guy Salmon women's world championship, was scratched from the event after arriving 15 minutes late for her second-round match because of a traffic accident on the M3. Although the match was played, with Leeming winning in straight sets, the organisers decided that she should be defaulted.

NETBALL: Five Derbyshire players have been included in the England squad to tour New Zealand and Australia next month. They will take part in the annual NZ Superstars series for the first time before travelling to Australia.

CRICKET: Five Derbyshire players have been included in the England squad to tour New Zealand and Australia next month. They will take part in the annual NZ Superstars series for the first time before travelling to Australia.

BASEBALL: The world junior pursuit champion, was named yesterday for the Great Britain team in the seven-day, 730-mile PruTour next month, together with Stuart Dangerfield, the national 25-miles time-trial champion, and Rob Hayles. The PruTour starts in London on May 23 and ends in Edinburgh on May 29.

BOWLS: Wales, who are preparing for the 2000 world outdoor championships in Johannesburg, won the first of four internationals against Botswana, triumphing in all six matches in the diamond-mining town of Jwaneng. After a shaky start, Will Thomas recovered his poise to score two full houses on his way to an excellent 25-16 victory over Tony Allen.

RALLYING

Kit-car triumph puts title chasers in panic

FROM JEREMY HART IN LLORET DE MAR

PHILIPPE BUGALSKI, of France, made history yesterday by driving the first rally kit-car to victory in a round of the world championship. He won the Catalonia Rally here on the Costa Brava by 32 seconds from Didier Auriol, his compatriot, in a Toyota. In third place was Tommi Makinen, the world champion, in a Mitsubishi.

BugalSKI, 35, the French champion, led from the start of the leg on Tuesday after Jesus Puras, his team-mate, failed to start his identical Citroën Xsara. No driver was able to get close to the two-wheel-drive French cars, which use four-wheel drive, were at a great disadvantage on the smooth Spanish mountain roads. Citroën only enters three rounds of the world championship and specialises in making cars for the French domestic series, on asphalt.

"I knew we would be quick, but to have held off the championship regulars is thanks to Citroën. I only drove," a tearful Bugalski said. "Starting the last stages, I was very nervous. I hardly slept last night but I didn't have worried."

BugalSKI's win was a blow for the seasoned championship contenders. Auriol desperately tried to close the gap in his Toyota but rain, forecast for the final stages, which would have benefited the heavier cars did not materialise.

"Philippe deserves the victory," Auriol, the winner last year, said. "But they have taken points from the drivers' championship and that is not right. They only do a few rallies and they could end up taking the title from me."

Makinen snatched third place on the penultimate stage after Carlos Sainz, the local favourite, had a puncture and battery failure and dropped out of the points. The Finn, who leads the championship from Auriol by just three points, incurred a penalty of a minute for a jump-start on Tuesday.

In fifth place, behind Freddy Loix, of Belgium, was Richard Burns, the Briton, in a Subaru. Burns was also penalised on Tuesday for a jump-start and suffered with lack of grip from his tyres. "Until there is more grip, any chance of winning is far off," a disgruntled Burns said.

SAILING

Beadsworth on trail of Olympic medal

FROM EDWARD GORMAN SAILING CORRESPONDENT IN HYERES

ANDY BEADSWORTH, for so long the leading British Soling skipper, is going through a familiar routine here on the Côte d'Azur. Like most of the Great Britain team, he and his crew have been billeted in the cheap studio apartments just behind the marina. Even with funding from the National Lottery, life is run on a "student-style" budget.

Yesterday, Beadsworth was looking ahead, to the chance of winning that elusive Olympic medal, in Sydney next summer. "We should have won a medal last time," he said. "There were many reasons why we didn't. We've got a better foundation to build on now and the time to do it. If you look at where we were four years ago compared to where we are now, we are ahead of the game."

But Beadsworth's disappointing fourth place in Savannah in 1996 underlined how difficult it is to produce the form necessary to win a medal on the day. Even now, he believes that there are up to ten crews in the Soling fleet capable of winning races in Sydney and among them are some formidable opponents — including Jochen Schumann, of Germany, the triple gold medal-winner, and Georgi Shayduko, of Russia, who won silver in Savannah.

Beadsworth has no doubt that the margins between the top boats and the also-rans in both the fleet-racing and match-racing disciplines that make up the Olympic Soling challenge are much tighter than last time round. "The biggest change is in the ability of the other competitors," he said. "At Savannah there were only a handful of people who could sail a Soling fast and match race, now virtually everyone can match race."

Rule changes have made the Soling medal more of a compromise than ever, with 12 of the 16 boats that qualify for the Games progressing to a complex match-racing eliminator after eight fleet races. Beadsworth has won in both fleet and match disciplines over the past 12 months and seems untroubled by the new arrangements. But he has yet to secure a place among the 16 that will make up the Games fleet.

The last chance, at which four more places will be decided, is the class European championships in Norway at the end of July. Among those still hunting a place are Schumann and Philippe Presti, of France. "Not having qualified yet is irritating more than worrying," Beadsworth said. "It's all about winning a medal so you have to believe you are going to go to the Games. Realistically I can't see us not qualifying, but these things do happen," he added. Yesterday Beadsworth finished a consistent enough fleet-racing series to qualify in sixth place for the last eight that go into the match racing finale today and tomorrow.

RUGBY UNION

WRU and rebel clubs close in on agreement

BY DAVID HANDS RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

THE intensely damaging saga of Wales's two rebel clubs may come to an end tomorrow if the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) can announce a face-saving formula that will restore Cardiff and Swansea to the fold. The effect of their 18-month breakaway, however, will take longer to erase.

Talks have continued this week with both the union and club representatives acknowledging that a united way forward must be found.

The WRU's legal advisers and the Cardiff board must ratify the results but it is likely that television money, withheld by the WRU since Cardiff declared their intention of playing against England's leading clubs, will be paid and that the threat of legal action against Swansea for non-repayment of loans will be dropped.

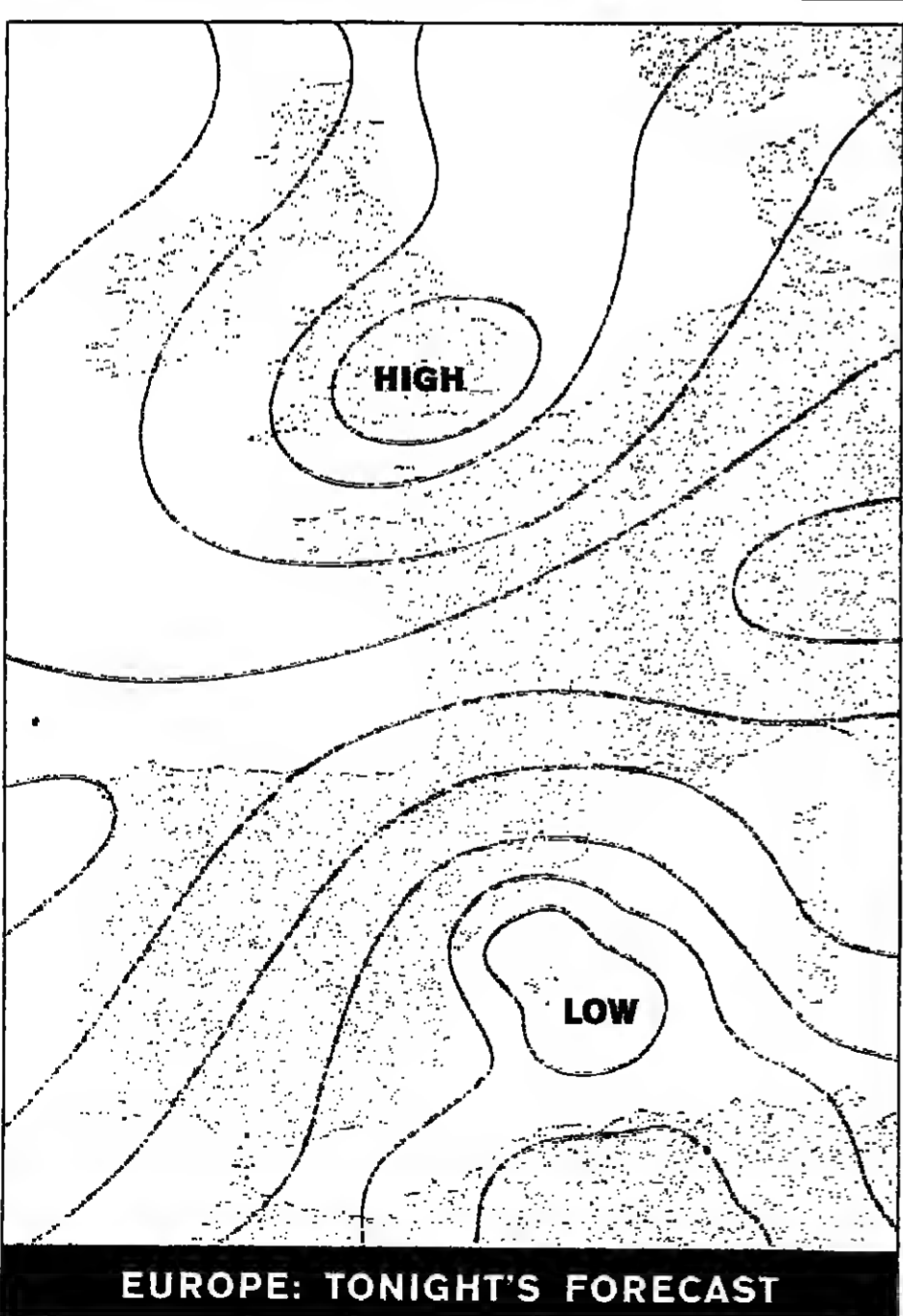
But both clubs will be expected to pay fines of £150,000 imposed by the WRU for playing unsanctioned games and both will have to acknowledge a commitment to European competition.

Should all this happen, the English clubs will breathe a sigh of relief: their relationship with Cardiff and Swansea, driven through by wealthy club owners, began in a covert manner and it has been a running sore ever since.

The quality of matches in the Anglo-Welsh series has been uneven to say the least, while the need to cater for two "outsiders" during negotiations over purely domestic affairs has been damaging. It has caused great resentment among England's second division clubs while the top Welsh clubs that have remained within the WRU orbit will not be universally thrilled if Cardiff and Swansea automatically receive two of the five qualifying places for Europe next season.

Indeed, Llyn Jones, the former Wales flanker who now coaches Neath, has already launched a scathing attack on Cardiff's "cheque-book" policy and the quality of rugby that they have played. "You can see by their performance on the pitch that the hunger has gone from their players," Jones said. "They are having it too easy. Cardiff should cut salaries, instead of forcing other clubs into paying the same unsustainable wages as them." There has been considerable criticism in Wales of Cardiff's coaching panel, led by Terry Holmes and Charlie Faulkner, fuelled last weekend by the heavy defeat by Llanelli in the SWALEC Cup semi-finals.

Cardiff are also wrestling with their neighbours, across the Severn, Bristol. Both clubs have made offers for Chris Wyatt, the Llanelli and Wales lock, and Bristol have also made a bid for Jonathan Humphreys, the Cardiff hooker and former Wales captain. Bristol are seeking, too, to tempt Garath Archer away from Newcastle and back to the West Country, where he first made his name.



Best of luck to Chelsea for their match against Real Mallorca.

Official sponsors of Chelsea F.C.

MEET SILK CUT CHALLENGE CUP FINALISTS

LONDON BRONCOS

AT LILLYWHITES, PICCADILLY
THIS THURSDAY 22nd APRIL

Martin Offiah, Peter Gill, Greg Fleming, Rob Smyth, Steele Retchless & Robbie Beazley will be visiting Lillywhites from Noon to 12.45pm.

Get their autographs and find out how they are going to beat the Leeds Rhinos at Wembley on Saturday 1st May in the Silk Cut Challenge Cup Final.

Free signed Canterbury of New Zealand rugby ball for some lucky fans (subject to availability)

CANTERBURY OF NEW ZEALAND

THE SIGNING HAS BEEN ARRANGED BY CANTERBURY OF NEW ZEALAND THE OFFICIAL KIT SUPPLIER TO LONDON BRONCOS

PERTH	
2.20 Mely Moss	3.50 Ashwell Bay
2.50 Prominent Profile	4.20 Prophits Pride
3.20 Dun Coody	4.50 Grooving
Carl Evans: 2.20 Mely Moss.	5.20 Country House
GOING: HEAVY (7.15AM INSPECTION) SIS	
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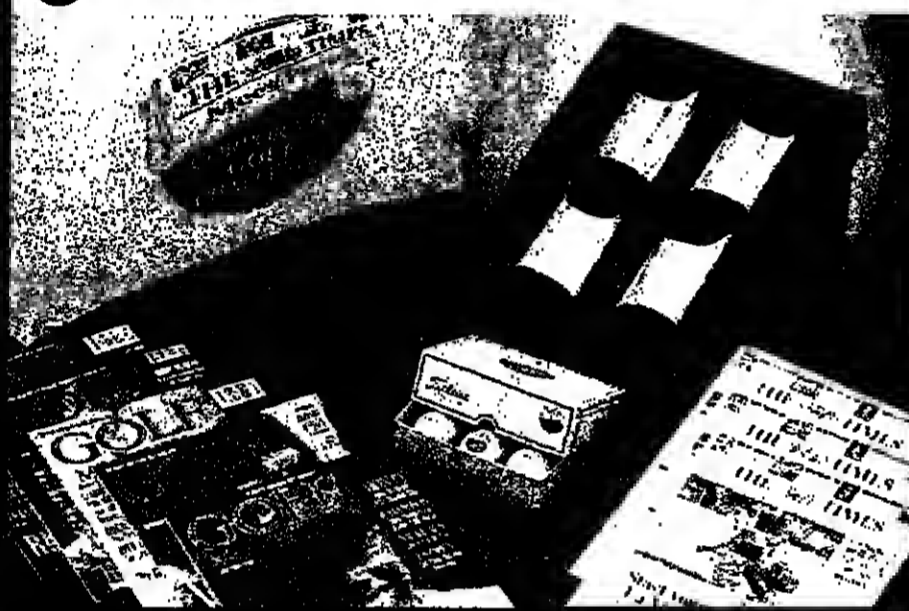
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At 42, Scott aims to break sub-four minute mile barrier

Oldest kid on track is running towards finish line

Age, illness and injury are the cruellest opponents in sport. Anyone brave enough to try to outrun them wins admiration even if he looks certain to lose.

And win or lose, they don't come any braver than Steve Scott. This week, the track world has been fascinated by pre-event publicity from the Drake Relays meeting in Des Moines, Iowa. According to reports, this Saturday, just a couple of weeks before his 43rd birthday, Scott will attempt to become the oldest athlete to break four minutes for the mile.

Scott, of all people, should know what he is taking on. He first broke that barrier as long ago as January 1977 in Los Angeles and since then he has run 136 sub-four minute miles — more than any other man in track history.

Throughout the 1980s he haunted the commercial circus of grand prix races in Europe and America, living out of a suitcase and thrashing out top-class miles. His opponents included such legends as Sebastian Coe, Steve Ovett and Steve Cram, as well as John Walker, the great New Zealander, his most frequent sparring partner and the first man to run under 3min 50sec.

Scott ran his last sub-four minute mile back where he had started, in Los Angeles, at 37, in 1993. By then he was already dreaming of cracking the barrier when he was past the age of 40.

That prize was snatched from him when Eamonn Coghlan, the Irishman, ran 3:58.15 in 1994 at the age of 41 on an indoor track in Boston. The sub-four by a veteran has still not been achieved outdoors, where the record is 4:02.53, held by Dave Moorcroft, who was 40 when he ran it.

Within weeks of Coghlan's record, Scott's phenomenal ability was overtaken by an opponent far more threaten-

ing than any who had ever pulled on spikes — he was struck by cancer.

Scott was diagnosed with testicular cancer in April 1994 and opted to undergo surgery in May. He rejected chemotherapy because he feared it might damage his lungs and he still hoped to keep running.

"After Eamonn Coghlan broke four minutes in March of 94, I more or less retired," Scott said. "I thought there was nothing really left. But when I came down with cancer the four-minute mile became my focal point. Eamonn might be the first to break it, but I could be the first to break four minutes who's also a cancer survivor."

Scott resumed training three months after his surgery, still dreaming of one more sub-four minute triumph. "In a lifetime of running I had learnt to face pain," he said in his biography, "I got ready to face the pain of cancer. I ran through the whole picture in my mind. Whatever my thoughts, running sub-four at 40 always popped up as well. I would not let go of my running goals. My life depended on that, too."

Twenty years ago exactly, Scott was the first to break the four-minute mark at the Drake Relays with 3:55.26. He had shown up the year before with the intention of setting the record, but woke up on the day of the race with a temperature of 103. He vowed he would return and crack the mark. He did it in style.

This time he is more cautious. "No promises," he said. "I cannot break four minutes whenever I want to now. I think I have a reasonable chance at this point. It would be kind of a storybook ending to come back 20 years later and achieve it there. It would be fun."

The sad truth, however, is that there is unlikely to be a fairytale ending to the Steve Scott story this weekend. His most recent race was at 5,000



Even when he was fighting cancer, Scott was dreaming of the day when he would be back on the track trying to add to his world record of 136 sub-four minute miles

metres at Carlsbad, California, where he ran 14min 30sec — not really an indication of four-minute speed.

Then a couple of days later, on March 31, Scott suffered a minor strain in his calf muscle and the injury stopped him training properly for nine days. It was April 10 before he could run freely again and he is still not back to anything like his peak form.

"At 23," he said, "you can recover your fitness in a week, but at 43 it takes two or three weeks and it's not there yet."

So he is likely to have a tough time when he lines up for the mile on Saturday, when his competition will include Paul McMullen, America's leading miler, who won the race last

year in 3:59.12. But Scott never gives up. If he fails this weekend he plans to find another race in late May. "I could never live without testing myself," he once said, "and after a quarter-century of taking the starting line, I'm not ready to hang up my spikes yet. I still feel like Scottie the Miller, a kid at heart."

This 42-year-old kid has already outkicked cancer and done enough training to give himself the speed and stamina to outrun time itself. So who knows, if he can shake off his calf injury, maybe there is just one more sub-four minute mile to be squeezed out of the ageing and battered body of Scottie the Amazing Miller.

JOHN BRYANT

'I could never live without being able to test myself'

Whitaker aims to buck World Cup odds again

JOHN WHITAKER, winner of the showjumping World Cup in 1990 and 1991, is "quietly confident" about his chances for the event that begins today in the Scandinavian arena here. Whitaker, 43, the only rider to have qualified for every final since the competition began in 1979, and Michael, his younger brother, are the only Britons among the 42 riders from 20 nations who have qualified this year.

While not one of the favourites — that honour is shared by Ludger Beerbaum, of Germany, the European champion, and Rodrigo Pessoa, of Brazil, the world champion and holder of the World Cup — John Whitaker comes to the final with two in-form horses, Virtual Village Grannusch, on which he was third in the Olympia World Cup qualifier, in all three legs. "He feels good and he's a fairly level-headed horse," he said. "I just hope I get off to a good start."

Beerbaum and Pessoa were both in buoyant mood yesterday to improve on his third place in the 1994 final. He intends to ride Virtual Village Ashley, on which he was third in the Olympia World Cup qualifier, in all three legs. "He feels good and he's a fairly level-headed horse," he said. "I just hope I get off to a good start."

Whitaker will rely on him again for the opening speed leg of the three-part final tonight. Traditionally, riders must finish in the top ten in this leg to have any chance of success.

"He's a touch on the fat side but feels very good," Whitaker said. "I've kept him fresh and only jumped him at two local shows this year." He has the advantage of being drawn 31st in contrast to last year, when he was first to go.

Whitaker will then switch to Heyman for the bigger second and third legs tomorrow evening and on Sunday afternoon. Although the ten-year-old gelding, on which he was runner-up to Trevor Coyle,

day, Beerbaum declared that Ratina, the mare on which he won the World Cup in 1993 and an Olympic team gold medal in 1996, felt "as good as ever". Pessoa, 26, who became the first rider to win the World Cup and world championships last year, is equally satisfied with Gandini Baloubet du Rouet, his French-bred stallion.

Other leading contenders include Coyle, who has had a superb season with Cruising, winning both the Millstreet and Geneva qualifiers, and Peter Charles, his compatriot, with Traudata Carnavelle, winners of the Berlin Grand Prix last November.

Switzerland has chances with Willi Melliger, on Calvaro, his 1996 Olympic silver medal-winner, and Beat Mandli, on Positano, runners-up in the Dortmund qualifier last week. With the United States fielding a ten-strong team, including Leslie Howard, the winner in 1986, the stage is set for an enthralling contest.

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 49

FLEECH

(a) Flattery: a piece of flattery. Of obscure origin, but at any rate it is mostly Teutonic.

GETON

(a) A small flag. Of obscure origin. The sense would suggest identity with the French *gazon*. "Every baronet shall have his banner displayed in ye field if he be chief captain, every knight his pennon, every squire or gentleman his geton or standard. A streamer shall be styt & so shall a standard as well as a geton."

GODOWN

(c) A warehouse or store for goods, in India and other parts of Eastern Asia. Malay, supposed to be from the Telugu and Tamil words meaning a place where goods lie.

GROLL

(c) A foolish or superficial person. A gossip or smatterer.

SOLUTION TO WINNING MOVE

1... Qxd2! 2 Rxd2 Rel+ 3 Rdl Rxd1 checkmate

TELEVISION CHOICE

Love story on an epic scale

Arena: Salman Rushdie and The Ground Beneath His Feet
BBC2, 11.30pm

Rushdie's new novel, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, is a three-sided love story on an epic, mythic scale, moving across three decades and three continents. It has as its setting the world of pop music — a bold decision for a writer not generally associated with that world. But, as he reveals in an interview with Francine Stock, it reflects his own life (he recalls first hearing and identifying with the earliest rock 'n' roll records and how being Indian was "cool" in Swinging Sixties London) and enables him to make the story (a reworking of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice) more directly involving to younger readers.

Aussie Birds: Pelican Island
Channel 5, 7.30pm

There is nothing complicated about this series, running Monday to Friday this week, which tells the story, tonight, of the Australian variety of the pelican. It is, however, an extraordinary tale, since these graceful fliers and voracious fish-eaters are virtual fossil birds, the species having survived almost unchanged for millennia. Tomorrow: Soaring Hunters. The Australian little eagle.

Making It
BBC2, 7.30pm (England and Wales only)

Vivien Maxwell, a mother of five and a farmer's wife living near Loch Lomond, surprised many when, as a student of interior design at the Glasgow School of Art, she won the Master's Medal as the Faculty of Royal Designers for Industry. As a result, she was offered a short-term contract in London with Rodney Fitch, a company specialising in retail shop and restaurant interiors. Although both sides seem to have given it their best shot, circumstances, the distance from home and the fact that she was not computer literate as a designer combined to make her experience less than happy and she abandoned her contract without notice.

A Tribute to Yehudi Menuhin
Radio 3, 7.30pm

What better indicator could there be of the esteem in which Menuhin was held during his long life in music? This tribute to him in words and music eats up almost the whole of tonight's Radio 3 schedules. If any facet of his contribution to 20th-century music-making and philanthropy has been left out, I can't detect it in the summary put out by the BBC. Among the recordings we will hear are the second movement of Menuhin's 1932 recording of Elgar's Violin Concerto, with the composer conducting, and Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante, K364, with the violinist partnering the viola virtuoso Rudolf Barshal. The climactic work is Menuhin playing the Beethoven Violin Concerto, with Furtwangler conducting the Philharmonia.

RADIO 1 (BBC)

6.30am Zoe Ball 9.00 Simon Mayo 12.00 Jo Whitey 3.00pm Chris Moyles 5.45 Newsbeat 6.00 Dave Pearce. The best in music. 8.00 Steve Lamacz: The Evening Session. New music and session tracks 10.10 John Peel. Musical treats 12.00 Andy Kershaw 2.00am Olve Warren 4.00 Scott Mills

RADIO 2 (BBC)

6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan 9.30 Ken Bruce 12.00 Jimmy Young 2.00am Ed Shear 5.00 Johnnie Walker 7.00 Bob Harris Country. With Sara Evans 9.00 Paul Jones 9.00 Take It Easy: California Cool (5/6) 9.30 The News 10.00 The 10.00 Boogie Woogie with George Melly (7/8) 10.30 Lynn Parsons 12.00 Katrina Leschka 3.00am Alex Lester

RADIO 5 LIVE (BBC)

5.00am Morning Reports 6.00 Breakfast 8.00 Nicky Campbell 12.00 The Midday News 1.00pm Ian Payne 4.00 Drive 7.00 News Extra 7.30 Wembley, the Church of Football (3/4) 8.00 The Thursday Match: Real Madrid v Chelsea. 9.00 Jackie Mason Cup semi-final, second leg 10.00 Late Night Live, including The Financial World Tonight 1.00am Up All Night

TALK RADIO

6.00am The Big Boys Breakfast 8.00 Scott Chisholm 12.00 Joselyn With Jacobs 1.00pm Anna Rasmussen 4.00 The Sports Zone 5.00 The Sports Zone 6.00 Jackie Mason Cup semi-final, second leg 10.00 Late Night Live, including The Financial World Tonight 1.00am Up All Night

VIRGIN

6.30am The Breakfast Show 9.30 Mark Forster 1.00pm Nick Abbot 4.00 Hanky Scott 6.45 Pete and Geoff 10.00 Gary Davies 1.00am Richard Allen 4.30 Phil Kennedy

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air Petros Trelawny with music and arts news, including a review of Michael Atkinson's production of *On the Edge* (1/2) 8.00 The Thursday Match: Real Madrid v Chelsea. 9.00 Jackie Mason Cup semi-final, second leg 10.00 Late Night Live, including The Financial World Tonight 1.00am Up All Night

RADIO 4

5.30am World News 5.35 Shipping Forecast 5.40 Inshore Forecast 5.45 Prayer for the Day 5.47 Farming Today With Anna Hill 6.00 Today with Sue MacGregor and James Naughtie 6.05 The World at One With Nick Clarke 9.00 Melvyn Bragg: In Our Time Guests join Melvyn Bragg to consider ideas and events which have influenced the present age 9.30 Blind Men on the Pangloss New series, Peter White's perspective on life without sight, exploring the world through sound, touch, smell and the help of others (1/2) 9.45 (FM) Serial: *Thoughts of an Idle Fellow* Adaptation of Jerome K. Jerome's tales of an idler's approach to coping with everyday life 9.45 (LW) Daily Service 10.00 *Woman's Hour* Jenni Murray talks to actress Eleanor Bron. Includes *Diary of a Provincial Lady* 11.00 Crossing Continents Nigerian villagers who have resorted to using traditional magic to light for a state in local conflicts 11.30 My Uncle Freddie By Alex Ferguson. Comedy set on Tyneside, charting the relationship between a boy and his uncle. Granddad Freddie is found dead and Leahy's future in Jarrow is assured. With Shaun Prendergast and Gareth Brown. Last in series (6/6) (1) 12.00 (FM) News 12.04pm News Headlines: Shipping Forecast 12.04pm You and Yours With Liz Barclay and John White 1.00 The World at One With Nick Clarke 1.30 Open Country Richard Unge unveils tales from the countryside of Essex 2.00 The Archers (1) 2.15 Afternoon Play: *I See the Moon* See Choice 3.00 Call You and Yours: 0900 010 0644 3.28 Appeal On behalf of the Bobby Moore Fund, which promotes research into bowel cancer (1)



Salman Rushdie discusses his latest novel in an Arena special (BBC2, 11.30pm)

Dispatches
Channel 4, 9.30pm

A highly topical and appropriate programme, in which a family of four in Walsall are challenged to do without their two cars for a week. If the Government's declared intention to woo us away from our reliance on private cars is to mean anything, this is exactly what should be happening. Odd, perhaps, that a "minority" television channel, often pilloried for its irresponsible approach to broadcasting, is the first to do anything concrete about it.

NYPD Blue
Channel 4, 10pm

Simone is dead, long live the new kid on the block. No sooner has Jimmy Smits left the 15th Precinct than blond, boyish Rick Schroder is checking in to become the new partner for Sipowicz (Dennis Franz). Schroder, as Danny Sorotson, looks like a teenager but quickly proves worthy of the respect of his new team-mates, and tonight's story of a drive-by shooting and subsequent bloody revenge among drug-dealers sets up several ways in which he will interact with the existing company. A promising debut.

Tony Patrick

RADIO CHOICE

I See the Moon
Radio 4, 2.15pm

In telling you about Alex Ferguson's down-to-earth ghost story, I must be very careful not to give the game away. So what can I write about *I See the Moon* without being a spoilsport? Firstly, I think I can tell you that the town-planner storyteller, played by Cliff Howells, is as haunted as a grown-up as he was as a child. Secondly, the silent film ghost whom he finds sitting at the top of a staircase in a rambling old house is as near to being a ghost as the spectral night-walker in *Hamlet*. Thirdly, the town-planner is a thorn in the side of the crooked development company who plan to put up executive housing where country houses once stood. And that, I'm afraid, is as far as I dare go.

Peter Daville

BBC WORLD SERVICE

5.00am The World Today 7.00 World News 7.15 Outlook 7.55 The World Today 9.00 World News 9.05 World Business Report 8.15 Inflight 8.30 Assignment 9.00 World News 9.05 From Our Own Correspondent 9.20 On the Shelf: Frankenstein 9.35 The World 10.00 World News 10.05 Understanding Cancer 10.20 Andy Kershaw's World of Music 10.50 Sports Round-Up 11.00 Outlook 11.30 Britain Today 11.45 World News Report 12.00 Newsdesk 12.30pm Assignment 1.00 World News 1.05 Outlook 1.45 Sports Round-Up 2.00 Newsdesk 3.00 World News 3.05 The World 3.30 Meridian Books 4.00 World News 4.05 Sports Round-Up 4.15 Weekend 4.30 The Greenfield Collection 4.45 Europe Today 4.50 World Business Report 5.45 Inflight 6.00 Newsdesk 6.30 Record News 6.45 Sports Round-Up 7.00 World News 7.15 Britain Today 7.30 Assignment 8.00 World News 8.05 The World 8.30 Collette: A Hitch Hiker's Guide 8.45 On the Shelf: Frankenstein 8.50 Newsdesk 9.00 World News 10.05 World Business Report 10.20 Britain Today 10.30 Meridian Books 11.00 World News 11.15 Sports Round-Up 11.30 Blues World 12.00 World News 12.05pm Outlook 12.45 Inflight 1.00 The World Today 2.30 The World 1.55 My Century 2.00 The World Today 2.30 Westway 2.45 Performance 3.00 The World Today 3.30 World Business Report 3.45 Inflight 4.00 The World Today 4.20 Sports Round-Up 4.30 The World Today

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Nick Bailey's Easter Breakfast. A selection of rousing music to start the day 8.00 Henry Kelly: The Hat of Fame Hour and CD of the Week 12.00 Lunchtime Requests: Jane Jones presents favourite music 2.00pm Concerto: Bochner's (Cello Concerto No 5 in D major) 3.00 Jonathan Cohen: Contrabasso and Alcantara Romance 6.30 Newsnight. The latest headlines and sport updates 7.00 Smooth Classics at Seven. John Brunning introduces classic sounds 9.00 Evening Concert. Evens: Symphony No 1 in E flat major; Bartok: Concerto for Orchestra; Kodaly: (Haydn) Janos Sulei 11.00 Mann at Night. A chance to wind down with the sound of ambient music 2.00am Concerto: Beethoven's (Cello Concerto No 5 in D major) (1) 3.00 Mark Griffiths: Easter Sunday

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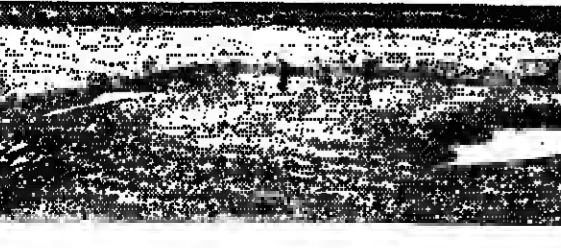
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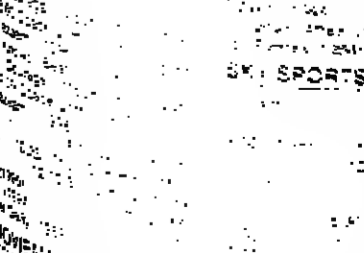
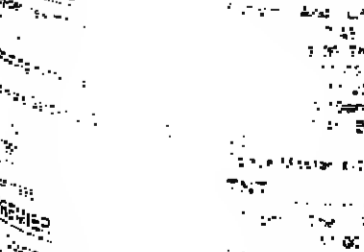
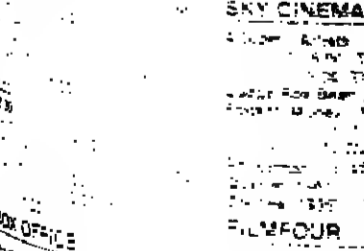
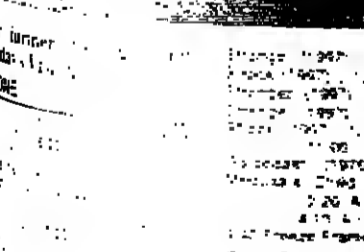
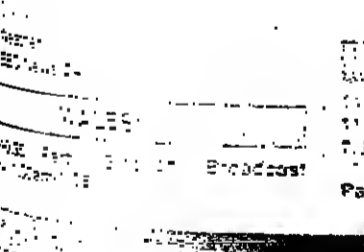
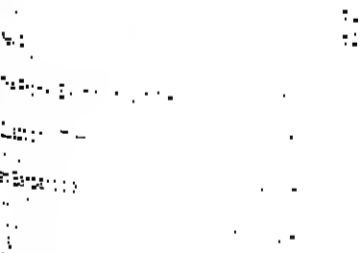
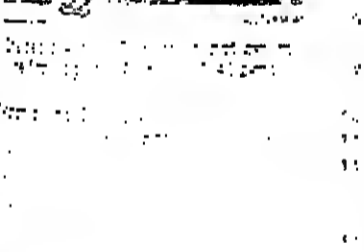
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Potted



مكتبة من الاما

Potted history of BBC sport's last bastion

When Luigi Barbarito, the Pope's emissary, found himself watching a sponsored snooker championship at a snooker club on the banks of the River Tyne, he was not alone. He was joined by a host of other snooker fans, many of whom were watching the match on television. The BBC's coverage of snooker has been a constant presence in the lives of millions of viewers, from the early days of the game to the present day.

Was Luigi making the point that a misanthropic youth needs to stop anyone getting into the habit of watching snooker on television? Or was he just making small talk? It's hard to tell. But maybe the BBC will enlighten us soon with a programme exploring the Vatican's historic links with snooker, because the BBC — having lost the rights to cover key sporting fixtures — is determined to milk every drop of TV time from those sports still in its grip.

Hence its recent golf coverage included special previews aimed at alerting dozy viewers to the imminent feast of TV golf, a game that

attracts large audiences in spite of the fact that the only person with powerful enough eyesight to spot the ball once it has left the tee seems to be the commentator. Everyone else looks up into the sky, apparently aping some ancient tribal custom, but they no more expect to catch sight of the little speck of white than they would expect to catch sight of Alastair Campbell smiling at a journalist.

So just in case there were any viewers out there who felt they were not getting sufficient snooker input from the BBC's down-to-earth coverage of the World Championship at Sheffield's Crucible Theatre, *Leviathan* (BBC2) came to the rescue with a potted history of the game. This turned out to be much more interesting than watching the snooker itself.

Snooker, it turns out, was invented a little over 100 years ago by a bored expatriate colonel in India, who devised the variations to the

traditional game of billiards on a rainy afternoon in the Raj.

Maybe every snooker fan already knows this. Maybe in the snooker halls of South London the patrons talk of nothing else but of how — every time they go to pot the pink — they can't help recalling Diana Vreeland's observation that pink is the navy blue of India. But it was news to me that snooker began life as a godsend, of jaded expats (not such a godsend, of course, to elephants, who suddenly found themselves having to provide enough tusks for sets of 22 ivory balls rather than for sets of just three, as for billiards).

To those who have always found it amusing that the BBC once used to broadcast snooker on black and white television, it was even more startling to learn that before that the BBC actually broadcast ball-by-ball coverage of snooker on

REVIEW



Joe Joseph

radio, which sounded so hilariously incongruous that the only person today who could pull off the job of a radio snooker commentator with any conviction would be John Prescott.

There's no reason why, of course, Prescott shouldn't continue his job as Deputy Prime Minister while moonlighting as a radio snooker commentator. Everyone moonlights nowadays.

Spin City (Channel 4) returned for a general third series last night starring not only Michael J. Fox as the deputy mayor of New York City, but also two of America's top 250 shaker hustlers. Conan O'Brien was moonlighting as a loopy zookeeper, and David Letterman apparently provided the voice of Rags, an ageing popster belonging to one of the mayor's team. As for Mayor Randall Winston himself, the credits said that he's played by Barry Bostwick, but doesn't he look suspiciously like PR man Max Clifford?

American actors and TV stars seem desperate to perform cameo in his sitcoms: many voices on *The Simpsons* are provided by Hollywood stars. The same goes for callers to Frasier Crane's radio phone-in show on *Fraser*. Big names are called to guest on *Friends*. They queue up for a seat on Larry Sanders's sofa. Maybe it's the same motivation that makes

people want to show their face at a new, impossibly fashionable restaurant — just to show they have the clout to get past the velvet rope without begging.

You half wonder if the trend is spreading here when you see *The Naked Chef* (BBC2), because its hip, handsome star — Jamie Oliver — looks suspiciously like the late, famously womanising, racing driver James Hunt did at about the same age. Last night, this TV chef for the MTV generation was making supper for his sister's hen night. The food looked great, but by the time they'd got to the liqueurs, the girls decided to abandon Jamie and hit town in search of the real James Hunt.

And in *The Pull of the City* (BBC2), George Monbiot, the eloquent environmental campaigner, looked astonishingly like a man weeding into the wind. In his documentary, *London Pride*, he was

aiming to show us that booming land prices are threatening London's vibrant social, economic and cultural climate by making it impossible for any but the very rich to live in the city. But haven't London house prices always been rising? What if it is precisely because of London's vibrant economy that all those ethnic and cultural minorities were attracted to the capital in the first place?

Monbiot wonders if it is paradoxical that Richard Rogers, who dreams of a London with more public spaces, is building an apartment complex on the Thames with 14 million penthouses. But what if the people who are lured to London by the availability of luxury housing are the same people who create the revenues and pay the taxes that help to fund more public spaces in London?

The whole thing may be even more baffling than listening to snooker on radio.

BBC1

- 8.00am Business Breakfast (81648)
- 7.00 BBC Breakfast News (1) (21367)
- 9.00 Killy (1) (870538)
- 9.45 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (1) (814087)
- 10.15 The Vanessa Show (1) (4087862)
- 11.00 News: Weather (1) (8748254)
- 11.05 City Hospital (1) (799071)
- 11.55 News: Weather (1) (8748254)
- 12.00 Going for a Song (8503241)
- 12.25pm Just a Minute (1) (3811218)
- 12.55 The Weather Show (1) (11366336)
- 1.00 News: Weather (1) (82844)
- 1.30 Regional News: Weather (8074648)
- 1.40 Neighbours (1) (1685445)
- 2.05 Through the Keyhole (1) (51228071)
- 2.30 Snooker: World Championship David Vine presents live coverage on the final day of the first round (7210342)
- 3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (8178342)
- 3.45 Chucklewood Critters (2236280)
- 4.10 Alvin and the Chipmunks (1004044)
- 4.20 Julia, Julia, and Hamlet (8748254)
- 4.30 The Big Bang Theory (7244087)
- 5.00 Newsround (513084) 5.10 Miami 7 (2037483)
- 5.33 Rewind (1) (578613)
- 5.35 Neighbours (1) (1685445)
- 6.00 Six O'Clock News: Weather (1) (203)
- 6.30 Regional News Magazine (261)
- 7.00 Watchdog: On the House New series. How the performance of the local school can add \$50,000 to a home's value, and the American approach to dealing with flood damage. Plus, the pros and cons of DIY conveyancing and a feature on choosing wood flooring (1) (4358)
- 7.30 America's Funniest Home Videos: Jerry Wogan introduces clips of sporting mishaps and mistakes (1) (237261)

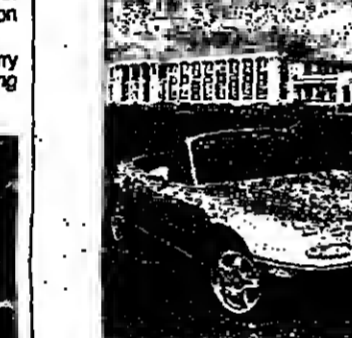


Chelsea's Albert Ferrer in action in the first leg, on April 8 (7.45pm)

- 7.45 Chelsea of the Day Live Real Mallorca v Chelsea (kick-off 8.00pm). Coverage of the Cup Winners' Cup semi-final second leg from the Luis Soria stadium in Mallorca. Presented by Des Lynam. In the event of extra time and penalties, subsequent programmes are subject to change (1) (1409984)
- 10.00 News: Regional News: Weather (1) (613637)
- 10.35 The Frank Skinner Show Comedy and conversation (1) (840803)
- 11.05 Question Time From Glasgow (1) (42020)
- 12.05am Barbara (1981) A legendary junglisters teams up with a naive German outlaw to escape a bloodthirsty Mexican clan. Western, starring Willie Nelson. Directed by Fred Schepisi (1) (1032385)
- 1.30 Weather (2816859)
- 1.35 BBC News 24 (8550491)
- 10.30-10.35 Party Election Broadcast (197464) 1.30am-1.35 News (2816859)

BBC2

- 7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: Noddy in Toyland (7.30) Top Cat (8675813) 7.55 Blue Peter (800006)
- 8.20 Dastardly and Muttley (8718377)
- 8.40 Polka Dot Shorts (3291396) 8.50 Pingu 8.55 Small Stories 9.00 Daytime On Two: Job Bank 9.10 Watch Out (8308716) 9.30 Watch 8.45 Come Outside (7180807) 10.00am Children's BBC: Teletubbies (10187) 10.30 Daytime On Two: Storytime (3737532) 10.45 The Experimenter (918631) 11.05 Space Ark 11.15 Zig Zag 11.35 Pathways of Belief (207396) 11.50 Susanne (2074445)
- 12.10pm The Geography Programme (745170) 12.30 Working Lunch (83272)
- 1.00 Wrestling (3830026)
- 1.10 The Leisure Hour (1) (1548829)
- 2.10 The Phil Silvers Show (1) (89610377)
- 2.40 News: Weather (1) (8021432)
- 3.45 Westminster (1) (5860261)
- 3.55 News: Weather (1) (5517687)
- 3.50 Snooker: World Championship First-round coverage (741071)
- 6.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Sisko, Kira and Bashir are stranded (1) (1448484)
- 6.45 Snooker: World Championship Further coverage (1) (144208)
- 7.30 Making It: Making It Profile of a mature design student Vivian Maxwell. Last in the series (1) (777)
- 8.00 Ray Meers' World of Survival Documentary about the Amazonian tribe, the Sanema (1) (1648)



A celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Mazda MX-5 (8.30pm)

- 8.30 Top Gear A guide to buying a second-hand car (1) (3483)
- 9.00 Modern Times Revamp of a run-down estate (1) (652025)
- 9.50 Snooker: World Championship First-round coverage (406203)
- 10.30 Newsnight (1) (814936)
- 11.18 Video Nation Shorts (1) (968434)
- 11.20 Arena Salma Hayek's new novel, The Ground Beneath Her Feet (1) (75793)
- 11.55 Holiday Weather (853938)
- 12.00 Despatch Box (87948)
- 12.30am BBC Learning Zone: Open University. Pacific Studies 1.00 Just in Time? 1.50 Open Late: Social Sciences 2.00 Further Education: Art and Design 4.00 Teaching Film and Media: Film Education — The Holocaust on Film 4.30 Film Education: The Distributor's Tale 5.00 Planet Europe — Making Friends 5.15 Planet Europe — Having a Voice 5.45 Open University: Global Tourism 6.10 Women, Children and Work
- 11.05am Your Assembly (8670735)
- 11.15-11.18 On Two (836222)
- 7.30pm Ray Meers' World of Survival (1) (777) 8.00-8.30 Shop Talk (1/3) (1648) 11.15 Party Election Broadcast (89434)

HTV

- 5.30am ITV Morning News (80700)
- 6.00 GMTV (264848)
- 9.25 Trisha (1) (3091819)
- 10.30 This Morning (1) (49808087)
- 12.15pm ITV News: Weather (1) (7781071)
- 12.30 ITV News: Weather (1) (2485025)
- 12.55 Shortland Street (1544833)
- 1.30 Lie Detector (1) (18851628)
- 1.55 The Jerry Springer Show (1) (5819087)
- 2.40 Wheel of Fortune (1) (2735342)
- 3.10 ITV News Headlines (1) (5516938)
- 3.15 ITV News (1) (5515203)
- 3.20 CTV: Mally (550822) 3.25 Twisted (585445) 3.35 Sylvester and Tweedy (5343803) 3.55 Lavender Castle (5364396) 4.05 Hey Arnold! (7822919)
- 4.30 Children's Ward (984)
- 5.00 Catchphrase (1) (2899)
- 5.30 WALE: Crazy Creatures The Welsh Mountain Zoo (1) (454)
- 5.30 WEST: Pleasure Guide (1) (454)
- 5.58 HTV Weather (655716)
- 6.00 HTV News (1) (377)
- 6.25 WALE: Party Election Broadcast By the Wales Green Party (470290)
- 6.29 HTV Crimeposters (470290)
- 7.00 Evening News (1) (629)
- 7.00 Emmerdale (1) (2754)
- 7.30 WALE: The Inside (2/4) (813)
- 7.30 WEST: We Can Work It Out (613)
- 8.00 The Bill Barker and Beach Jackie a violent family. Police drama, with Matthew Crompton and Andrew Paul (1) (6445)



Leo (Sasha Dhewan) and Anita (Dimitra Gotti) take shelter (9pm)

- 9.00 The Last Train Jandra lies injured following the collapse of the factory floor, and she suffers a series of terrifying visions. Part four of the post-apocalyptic drama, with Anita Dhill, James Hazeldine and Janet Dale (4/5) (1) (8209)
- 10.00 WALE: The Ferret (81813)
- 10.00 WEST: Tonight with Trevor McDonald Report on a legal drug used in "date rape" attacks (1) (8396)
- 10.30 WALE: The Sharp End Reaction to the forthcoming National Assembly elections (7261)
- 11.00 HTV Nightly News: Weather (1) (557822)
- 11.20 HTV News and Weather (1) (353613)
- 11.30 WALE: Tonight with Trevor McDonald (1) (54483)
- 11.30 WEST: A Trip in the Cosmic Buggy A night at the Goldgliders Foam Party (1) (87025)
- 12.00 Public Morale (1) (54472)
- 12.30am The Jerry Springer Show (1) (994456)
- 1.15 Transposters (1) (279762)
- 2.15 Pop Down the Pub (42255)
- 2.45 Box Office America (4705410)
- 3.10 Cybernet (84180410)
- 3.40 Murder, She Wrote (2571859)
- 4.30 Coach (1) (5332675)
- 4.50 ITV Nightscreen (3089188)

CENTRAL

- As HTV West except: 12.20pm-12.30 Central News: Weather (1) (8095700) 12.35 Lie Detector (1) (18851628) 1.25 The Jerry Springer Show (1) (5819087) 3.15-3.20 Central News: Weather (1) (5515203) 5.30 Shortland Street (454) 6.00-6.30 Central News at Six: Weather (1) (377) 11.20-11.30 Central News: Weather (1) (353613) 11.30-11.35 Lie Detector (1) (18851628) 1.25 The Jerry Springer Show (1) (5819087) 3.15-3.20 Central News: Weather (1) (5515203) 5.30 Shortland Street (454) 6.00-6.30 Central News at Six: Weather (1) (377) 11.20-11.30 Central News: Weather (1) (353613) 11.30-11.35 Lie Detector (1) (18851628) 1.25 The Jerry Springer Show (1) (5819087) 3.15-3.20 Central News: Weather (1) (5515203) 5.30 Shortland Street (454) 6.00-6.30 Central News at Six: Weather (1) (377) 11.20-11.30 Central News: Weather (1) (353613) 11.30-11.35 Lie Detector (1) (18851628) 1.25 The Jerry Springer Show (1) (5819087) 3.15-3.20 Central News: Weather (1) (5515203) 5.30 Shortland Street (454) 6.00-6.30 Central 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LONDON MARATHON 45-48

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SPORT

THURSDAY APRIL 22 1999

CRICKET 49

Discontent in Pakistan camp as Miandad steps down as coach



Fears about Hungary trip recede

Keegan set to compromise over selection

By GEORGE CAULKIN

KEVIN KEEGAN, whose faith in the power of positive thought is the stuff of legend, will have grasped the news that England are once more a top-ten side in the Fifa world rankings with all the vigorous enthusiasm with which a shipwrecked sailor would cling to a lifebelt. It will not have escaped the notice of the temporary England manager, who names his second international squad today, that choppy waters lie ahead.

It is not unusual for a football coach to be subjected to the stinging barbs of criticism, but, in this instance, Keegan's hide will need to be thicker than most. Whoever he chooses for the match away to Hungary next Wednesday, which ever clubs are required to lose their players, a chorus of disapproval will doubtless be heard. The euphoric response to England's 3-1 victory over Poland last month must already seem a fond, fading memory.

Though it is hardly Keegan's fault — the match was arranged by Glenn Hoddle, his predecessor — this is a fixture that satisfies nobody. A clutch of FA Carling Premiership managers have voiced their concern at such insensitive timing for a meaningless game while, with England due to play in Budapest at a venue only 200 miles from the Serbian border, security has become a salient issue.

The Football Association was at pains to give forthright reassurance on the latter point last night, having yielded to Government advice on the matter of safety. It is now reasonable to assume that unless the situation in Kosovo deteriorates grievously, the match will proceed as planned.

"When we have an obligation to play an international game, we don't waver on our obligations, lightly," David Davies, the FA's executive director, said. "Indeed, when

we pulled out of games in the past, we didn't do so without a lot of soul-searching first. "In this case, we have been in regular contact with the Foreign Office and their advice is that there is no reason not to travel to Hungary. We feel that we have an obligation to the fans, both those who are travelling from England as well as the Hungarian supporters who have bought tickets."

From Keegan, however, a series of explanations will still be required. Though he has expressed his sympathy for the likes of Arsène Wenger,



Keegan expects criticism

George Graham and Ruud Geulit, all of whom have stated their dissatisfaction at the prospect of losing their most influential players at a crucial stage of the season, he has little option other than to select the best at his disposal, even if there are championship, European and relegation issues still to be decided.

A form of compromise is nonetheless likely. "The squad is a matter for Kevin," Davies said. "I know he's been talking to various managers and I'm sure there will be some give and take." Players nursing injuries or strains will not be selected, leaving a glittering opportunity to promote from

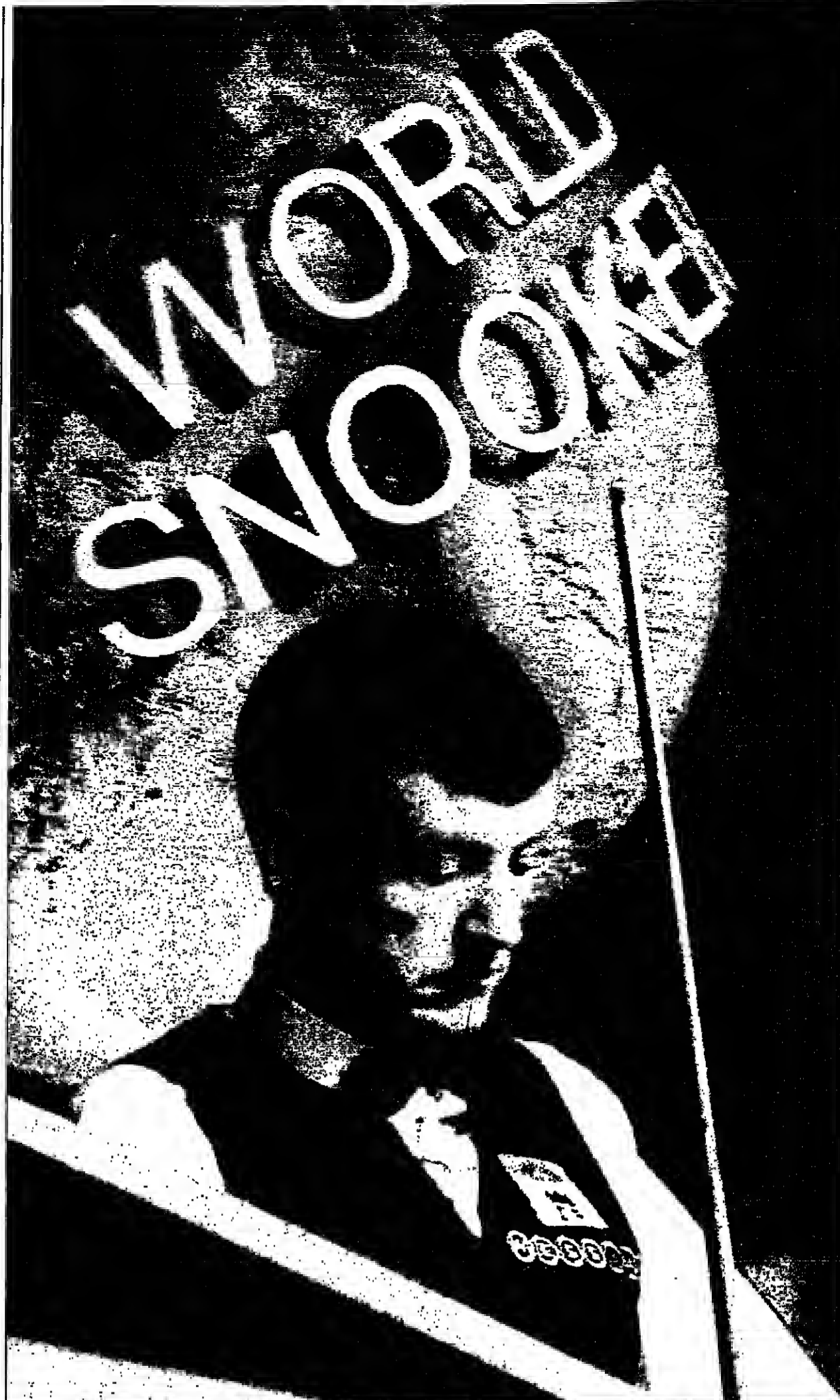
within. Regular mainstays of the under-21 team, such as Frank Lampard, Richard Wright and Emile Heskey, can expect advancement.

A source of apprehension or not, the journey to eastern Europe will at least be undertaken in the knowledge that Keegan's appointment has already had a significant effect. England have improved their position in the rankings by one place, to tenth. They are the only home nation to rise. Scotland and Northern Ireland are down two places, to 28th and 69th respectively, and Wales are 82nd.

All in all, it was a busy day at Lancaster Gate. Gordon Strachan, the Coventry City manager, was fined £1,000 plus costs and censured for his part in the touchline mêlée that marred his team's match away to Chelsea in January. Noel Whelan, the Coventry striker, must also pay £750 and costs, although it was decided by a disciplinary commission that Jim Blyth, the goalkeeping coach, had no case to answer.

The Stamford Bridge contingent did not escape unpunished for their part in the confrontation. Mark Nicholls, the midfielder, was fined £750 while Aaron Lincoln, the kit manager, and Terry Byrne, the masseur, must pay £200 and £250 respectively. Whelan was also fined £1,000 and given a one-game suspension after receiving his eleventh yellow card. Olivier Dacourt, the Everton midfielder, was fined £2,500 and warned as to his future conduct after amassing 14 yellow cards.

Mark Bosnich, the Aston Villa goalkeeper, has denied reports that he will join Manchester United at the end of the season. The Australia international, 27, is out of contract this summer, but has dismissed suggestions that he might command a weekly wage of £50,000 at Old Trafford. "I would have to be Pelé, Maradona and Ronaldo rolled into one to deserve that money," he said.



Black mood: Steve Davis, the six-time champion, slumps in disbelief as a magnificent comeback in the first round of the Embassy world championship is thwarted on the last black yesterday. Report: page 50. Photograph: John Giles

CATCH OF THE SEASON

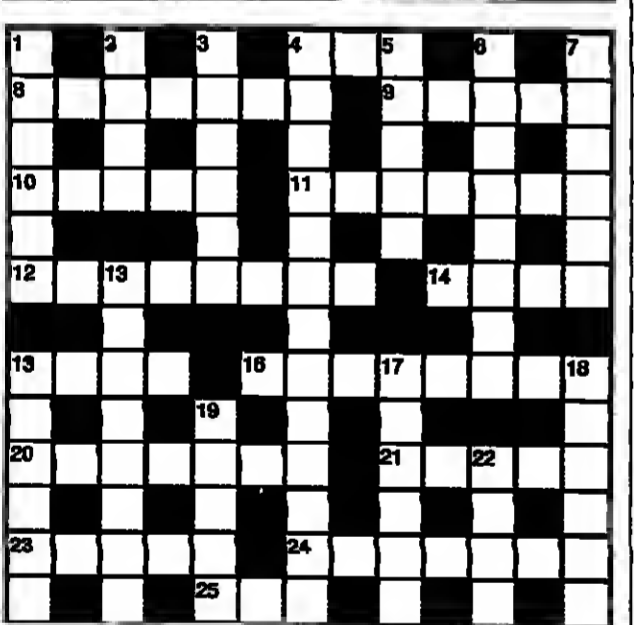


CHRISTOPHER MARTIN-JENKINS

The voice of cricket joins The Times

The best-known name in cricket journalism is joining The Times. Christopher Martin-Jenkins becomes chief cricket correspondent on May 1, in time to lead our coverage of the World Cup. Martin-Jenkins, who was voted the sports reporter of 1996, joins from The Daily Telegraph, where he was the cricket correspondent for eight years. He was previously cricket correspondent of the BBC and he remains a member of the Test Match Special team. His books include The Complete Who's Who of Test Cricketers and The Wisden Book of County Cricket. An extract from his latest, An Australian Summer, will appear in The Times next month.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1698

- ACROSS
4 Shack (3)
8 Have anguish (over) (7)
9 Illicit spirit ... (5)
10 ... Russian spirit (5)
11 Gradually unfreeze (7)
12 Get over (embarrassment) (4,4)
14 Grain store; missile chamber (4)
15 Connection (4)
16 Sloppy; in broken-down shoes (once) (8)
20 Close-together group (7)
21 Give permission for (5)
23 Chief city of Piedmont (5)
24 Swiss city, 1925 Pact (7)
25 A hair preparation (3)
- DOWN
1 Wonder (at) (6)
2 Fill (sorry); a burden (4)
3 Wonder-worker (6)
4 Serious punishment awaits (5,4,4)
5 Stealing (5)
6 Single big stone; faceless organisation (8)
7 Minority (slum) area (6)
13 Leading force (8)
15 Find position of (6)
17 A fish; sounds like 15 down (6)
18 Ernest —, Cymara poet (6)
19 Nettle, bee attack (5)
22 Ancient stringed instrument (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1697
ACROSS: 1 Sawbill 5 Fleck 8 Undue 9 Academe 10 God 11 Falsehood 12 Encore 14 Pliers 17 Recipient 18 Fob 19 Asphalt 20 Miami 21 Metre 22 Extreme
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Relegation battlers will have only themselves to blame

By STEPHEN WOOD

RARELY will luck or destiny have played such a supporting role in the scramble to escape relegation. The fixture computer has conjured up so many "six-pointers" that whichever teams have fallen out of the FA Carling Premiership by May 16, they will have little else to blame but themselves.

Indeed, the only predictable scenario in the closing acts of the final season of the millennium is that Nottingham Forest will spend the beginning of the 21st century in the Nationwide League first division. For ten days now, they have finished their own matches only to await news from other grounds.

Three times, the news has been good, but it is inconceivable that the stays of execution can continue. The end could come on Saturday, if either Blackburn Rovers or Charlton Athletic are victorious.

Even with Forest gone, however, the competition becomes more intense. Logically, it appears that the remaining two relegation places could be filled by five other teams. Charlton Athletic, who drifted helplessly into the bottom three after the 4-1 defeat by Tottenham Hotspur on Tuesday night, are looking vulnerable.

Yet Alan Curbishley, their manager, is wise to the shifting sands of the Premiership. "Everybody thought Everton were dead and buried a couple of weeks ago," Curbishley said. "But suddenly they win two on the spin and now, supposedly, they're safe. It can change quickly for us, too."

They meet Everton, who still only have 37 points, at Goodison Park on Saturday, while the next weekend, Blackburn visit The Valley.

What an occasion that promises to be. The two sides are separated today by just one goal and, although Blackburn have a game in hand, it is against Manchester United. Brian Kidd, the Blackburn manager, has tried to appear as aloof as possible recently. "There's no talk of relegation," he said. "We'll just carry on doing our best and hopefully we'll be here next season."

Kidd is not exactly burying his head in the sand, but his

managerial inexperience has given rise to rather more scepticism than may have been expected at Ewood Park. Nevertheless, if they beat Charlton and take maximum points from their home encounter against Forest, scepticism could give way to optimism.

In addition, the club was yesterday lifted by news of Stéphane Henchoz, the defender. Rumours suggested that he was out for the season with a groin injury, but the player has indicated that he will soldier on.

The signals being emitted from Everton yesterday were rather mixed. Olivier Dacourt,

the midfielder, was told by a Football Association disciplinary hearing that he must pay a fine of £2,500 for amassing 14 bookings this season. However, he was not given another suspension, as was originally feared. Counterbalancing that was the publication of the club's pre-season matches for the summer. Pessimism is rife, it seems, for Everton will face the Nationwide League talents of Rotherham United, Manchester City and Tranmere Rovers in July.

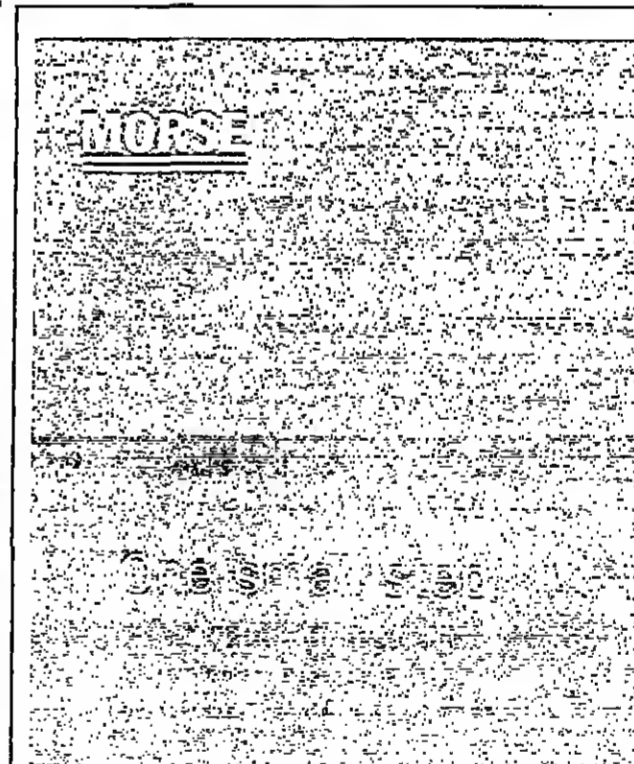
Six points from their latest two games have transformed Everton, but if things take another turn for the worse, their final match of the campaign, against Southampton at The Dell, should be an entertaining experience.

Whatever Everton's fate by then, Southampton, who lie second from bottom today, are likely to have to beat them to stay up. That is unless they can reap maximum rewards from the next three games, against Derby County, Leicester City and Wimbledon. Perhaps then, the last of the five teams in danger, Coventry City, will be back in the mire. That is dependent on their fortunes in the next three games — against Leicester City, Wimbledon and Derby.

EVERTON: April 26; Charlton (H); May 1; Chelsea (A); May 8; West Ham (H); May 16; Southampton (A). COVENTRY CITY: April 24; Leicester (A); May 1; Wimbledon (H); May 8; Derby (A); May 16; Leeds (H). BLACKBURN ROVERS: April 24; Liverpool (H); May 1; Charlton (A); May 8; Nottingham Forest (H); May 16; Manchester United (H); May 18; Newcastle (H). CHARLTON ATHLETIC: April 24; Everton (A); May 1; Blackburn (H); May 8; Aston Villa (A); May 16; Sheffield Wednesday (H); May 18; Leicester (H); May 22; Wimbledon (A). NOTTINGHAM FOREST: April 26; Aston Villa (A); May 1; Sheffield Wednesday (H); May 8; Blackburn (H); May 16; Leicester (H).



Dominguez's goal for Tottenham was in part responsible for sending Charlton back into the relegation zone



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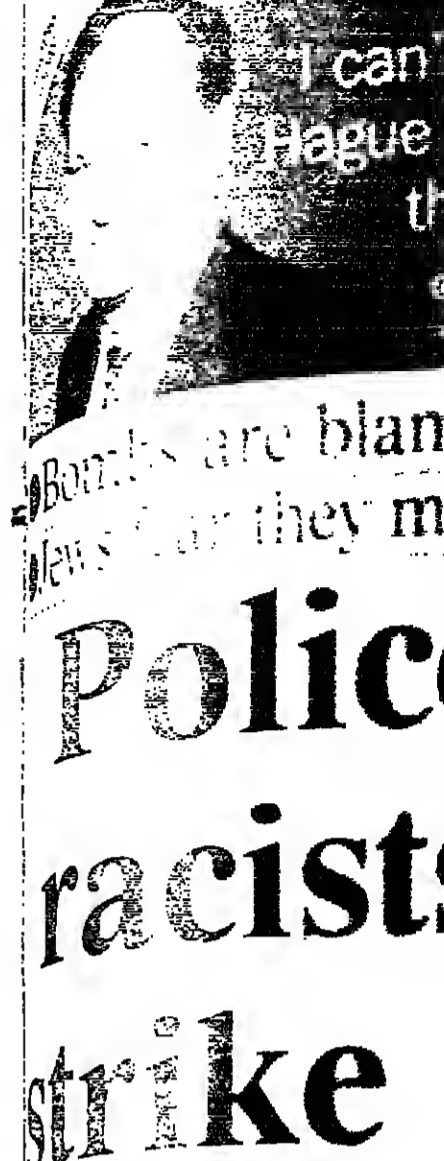
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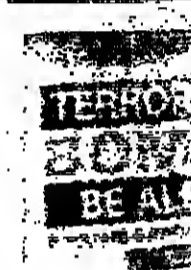


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